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the Mennonite

January 4, 2000

the past and future of mission

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Revisiting the birth

In his Dec. 21, 1999, editorial ("The Muck and the Mire"), Gordon Houser paints a picture of a couple of irresponsible, bumbling teenagers lucky to have brought the baby Jesus safely into this world. There seems to be a group of people wanting to glorify the unwed mothers, the homeless, the poor and the otherwise irresponsible misfits of this society and unashamedly use Mary and Joseph as their example.

Rather than being their role model, a more likely scenario would be to find Joseph and Mary married (Matthew 1:24) with Joseph being a mature man, taking responsibility for the baby and thus eliminating any shame for Mary. With his carpentry skills well developed, Joseph had the funds to travel by other means than by foot to register for the census in Bethlehem and then to Elizabeth's home near Jerusalem to await the arrival of the baby.

Mary was probably in her early 30s and Joseph in his 40s or early 50s. (Teenagers don't wait to have sex for the better part of a year after they are married and living together.) Mary and Joseph's parents were no longer living, and Joseph may have been a widower and experienced in delivering children. I expect Joseph to be wise enough to find a spot in the barn where there was clean straw and stay out of the manure. This whole story probably happened not in winter but in early fall, either just before or just after the Feast of Tabernacles, which created a shortage of housing for travelers. Maybe Joseph even intended to keep the Feast while Mary was with Elizabeth.

Mary never suspected that she was giving birth to the Messiah. She knew! And as for the risk of the baby dying, forget it. There was no way that this was going to happen. God used a very humble setting for the birth of Jesus, but he didn't choose a couple of idiots to be his parents.—*Harley Hofstetter, Dalton, Ohio*

The Dec. 21 issue seems to make much of Mary being an unwed teenager as in the editorial and in Kenneth Gibble's article ("What Kind of Christmas Card to Send?"), which says Mary was pregnant and not married. Perhaps it's time for a rereading of the Matthew account of the birth of Jesus. At least three translations—King James, NIV and NRSV—say Joseph took Mary "as his wife" (Matthew 1:24). It seems unlikely that Mary would have accompanied Joseph to Bethlehem had this not been so. Furthermore, it is doubtful that she said, "Yes ... without thinking," as the editorial suggests, although she could not have known all the implications. The Magnificat makes it clear that she understood her pregnancy to be the fulfillment of prophecy.—*Ruth Kauffman, Goshen, Ind.*

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readers say

Sisters' service

The Fellowship of Concerned Mennonites, in their regular meeting on Dec. 10, 1999, considered the action of the Bishop Board of Lancaster Conference regarding the credentialing of women for the ministry ("Lancaster to Grant Credentials for Women Ministers But Reaffirms Male Headship in Church Structures," Nov. 2, 1999). Questions can be raised as to the relevance of Paul's writing (1 Corinthians 14:34,35; 1 Timothy 2:9-15, 5:2; Titus 2:3-5). Does the Lord intend that such Scriptures be guiding principles for the 21st-century church? If not, where shall direction be found?

Concern was expressed regarding complete restraint of sisters' services in certain Mennonite congregations. It is noteworthy that in the qualifications for pastors and overseers, the apostle Paul said nothing that relates to women in ministry.

The central motivating factor of the Reformation seems to be ignored: "Sola Scriptura," or "Only the Scriptures."—*J. Otis Yoder for the Fellowship of Concerned Mennonites, Harrisonburg, Va.*

All in the family?

Re Theron Schlabach's letter (Readers Say, Dec. 14, 1999): If the Anabaptist church membership is not best described with a family analogy, what analogy is better? Or do we want to keep the church and family separate so we can kick out certain people? This seems to reinforce an arrogant idea that by removing those who are not "pure," the community can stay pure and spotless. Does this really make us pure and spotless in God's eyes? This attempt may only exhibit our lack of humility and self-criticism as the created.—*Shuji Moriichi, Minneapolis*

Cover photo
by Ron Flaming

Mission past

Learning from past mission efforts helps us face the future.

by Wilbert R. Shenk

> Whenever we become timid about the gospel, we fall back on other powers—methods and strategies, expertise and capital—to accomplish the mission.

A hundred years ago, North American Mennonites were beginning to shed their cocoon of self-protection. For three centuries, Mennonites had maintained defenses against a hostile world. They insisted that a lived faith was the most potent form of Christian witness.

One of the main incentives for Mennonites to migrate to North America, starting late in the 17th century, was the promise of religious freedom. Although they found in the United States and Canada freedom from religious persecution, they clung to their distrust of the world, emphasizing separation as the hallmark of Christian faithfulness.

In the 19th century, two things combined to overturn the traditional Mennonite outlook: the Protestant missionary movement and the evangelical revivals in Europe and North America. These two movements helped transform the traditional Mennonite view of witness. By the late 1800s, Mennonites were caught up in the rising tide of mission enthusiasm and began sending missionaries from the close-knit communities of Canada and the United States to such exotic-sounding places as Dhamtari, Champa, Balodgahan and Jagdeeshpur. On the home front they were venturing into the growing industrial cities—Philadelphia, Chicago and Toronto—as well as Appalachia and Indian reservations.

Looking back on this century of missionary experience, I single out five learnings:

1. The gospel is the singular resource available to the church. The apostle Paul spoke of the gospel as the "treasure." We are inclined to emphasize the availability of material and financial resources and dedicated and qualified people as prime reasons for engaging in mission. Indeed, North American Mennonites have accumulated an impressive amount of material and professional resources. But the first apostles never appealed to such things. They understood themselves to be servants of the gospel. Whenever we become timid about the gospel, we fall back on other powers—methods and strategies, expertise and capital—to accomplish the mission.

For Paul the gospel is simply but profoundly "the saving power of God" (Romans 1:16 NEB). Everything follows from this. The New Testament does not discuss effective methods of evangelization, church planting or relief work—although the first Christians engaged in all of these activities. Rather, the story line traces the penetration of the gospel among diverse peoples and cultures where communities of faith were being established that acclaimed Jesus as Lord. This was the seal of their authenticity.

2. The gospel embraces every facet of the human situation. As Mennonites began responding to the call to mission, they leaned on the theology of other Protestants. Early in the 20th century the modernist-fundamentalist controversy warped Christian thinking and polarized the church. The wholeness of the gospel was compromised. Mennonites did not escape this controversy; they allowed their theology to be compartmentalized. Discipleship and peacemaking were dubbed Mennonite "peculiarities" and set aside as secondary concerns. The gospel was reduced to fit either a "social gospel" or an "evangelistic" model. We still have not fully recovered from this thinking. Over the decades—from China, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Nepal and many other places—we have heard how the gospel has transformed life and given hope in difficult situations.

3. The faithful church is intentional about its missionary calling. The inward-looking and defensive stance that marked Mennonites for three centuries led to ingrown provincialism. The church must present an alternative to the world by living as a "contrast" society, but Christian vitality cannot be sustained by withdrawal. Following World War II, mission proponent and church leader J.D. Graber challenged North American Mennonites: "Every congregation a mission outpost."

Graber wanted to mobilize every Mennonite congregation for mission by deploying members into new church planting efforts across North America while increasing the number of missionaries sent abroad. Church extension on the home front was largely lay-led and lay-supported.

This intentional missionary action has redefined Mennonite identity, markedly changing the composition of the Mennonite church. Today over half of all Mennonites are in Asia, Latin America and Africa—continents where no Mennonites were to be found in 1850. The current *Mennonite Directory* reveals a substantial number of congregations in Canada and the United States that worship in languages other than English or German. Our church-wide assemblies increasingly reflect the cultural diversity that is coming to charac-

mission future

terize the North American Mennonite church.

4. Mission takes place on the periphery. Every congregation faces the ever-present temptation to settle into a comfortable pattern that serves the interests of its members rather than staying focused on the world of brokenness, unbelief and rebellion against God. As a reality check, every congregation ought to consider this question: What percentage of the people baptized in this congregation this year claimed no Christian background? The degree to which a congregation is penetrating the world will be reflected in the way this question is answered.

The past 100 years show that Mennonites are effective evangelists and church developers when they are deployed for this purpose. But we continue to expend most of our energies on the centers—i.e., established congregations and institutions—rather than deliberately dispersing to the periphery.

5. Authentic mission results from the initiative of the Holy Spirit and will be filled with surprises. North American culture values efficiency. We want maximum results with minimum inputs of resources. This applies to our approach to mission as much as it does the way we run our factories and businesses. We emphasize the importance of proper methods—in church planting, community development and health care. But the lesson we should learn from our rich experience in world mission is that the Holy Spirit is the only reliable leader of mission—and the Spirit is not dependent on our methods. To tell the story of these 100 years in mission accurately and adequately will require that we trace the work of the Holy Spirit instead of concentrating on structures, programs and methods.

What about the future?

The end of this first century of Mennonite engagement in world mission coincides with large-scale historical and cultural change. The postmodern world is pushing aside the modern. A hallmark of modernity has been the great confidence people have had in science and human rationality. This confidence is being questioned. There is growing openness to things spiritual. But young people are not flocking to the church to satisfy their spiritual hungers. Many distrust institutions, including the church, because these have been boosters of the modern project. The generation born between 1961 and 1981 has experienced the highest rate of divorce among its parents in history. Little wonder they long for a place where relationships can be reconciled and restored. They are seeking networks where the focus is on relationships.

We must keep asking, How can the Mennonite church remain responsive to this changing world? I suggest these guidelines:

1. Reorient the church around its true purpose: mission. The experience of the past century shows what happens when the church becomes intentional and honors its true purpose. Yet mission is only one of many programs of the church. Without mission the church will perish. The authentic church is a body of people—not an inflexible institution—poised to follow the Holy Spirit in fulfilling God's mission. This people will create such organization as is needed to carry out the mission, but organization is secondary.

2. Stay focused on the world where mission takes place. Christians will treat the world with compassion, as does God (John 3:16). We must listen carefully and with discernment. Jesus' basic method was to reply to the questions people asked him. Typically, he responded with probing counter-questions. Encounters with Jesus became encounters with God. These meetings happened along the byways of life, not in church.

3. Cultivate confidence in the gospel. Confidence in the gospel grows naturally as we live out of the gospel. A church secure in the gospel faces the future with hope.

4. Encourage flexibility and innovation in methods and forms of church. This stance threatens some people; but modern culture gives authority to the future, not the past. True Christian security is found neither in a particular historical period nor in organizational forms or patterns. It is the fruit of the bond between God and God's people. Structures and methods are tools that enable the people of God to do their God-given work in each generation effectively.

Today we face a double challenge. First, the end of one cultural epoch and the opening of a new one are testing us at many points. Second, the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church are committed to merging into one church body. The experience in mission this past century assures us that the church can surmount all kinds of challenges—not by turning inward but by staying focused on its essential missionary purpose.

> We continue to expend most of our energies on the centers—i.e., established congregations and institutions—rather than deliberately dispersing to the periphery.

Wilbert R. Shenk is professor of mission history and modern culture at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.

Gift sharing in the global church

Receiving, transforming and reciprocating gifts

by Tim Lind

Some years ago, when I was a Mennonite Central Committee administrator, our young family, with five rowdy children under the age of 10, attended a small church in Lancaster, Pa. In the congregation was an old Russian Mennonite woman, Trude Neufeld, who for some reason, together with her daughters, "adopted" us and at regular intervals showered us with gifts of clothing, food and money. She was also a faithful supporter of MCC and spent much of her time making beautiful quilts for MCC blanket drives and relief sales.

One Sunday after church, shortly after I had returned from an administrative trip to Africa, I spoke with Mrs. Neufeld about the complexities of relief and development work, thinking all the time about some of the waste and misuse of relief supplies I had observed. Finally she looked up at me with a smile and said simply, "I'm so grateful."

Only later did I realize that her words were relevant to our conversation. She was saying it was out of gratitude for the gifts she had received that she in turn gave gifts. She had little interest in controlling the good her own gift might do. The incident reminded me of the story of the "sinful" woman, as told in Luke, who "wasted" valuable perfume on Jesus' feet; or the story of Hannah, who received from God the gift of a child, Samuel, then returned that gift to the Lord, for life, as soon as he was weaned.

Because gift exchange is such a universal religious and sociological theme, and because it involves the transfer of symbols and other messages through relationships, I believe it can be a fruitful metaphor for reflecting on mission in the context of a global church.

Gift giving is a foundational theme in all of life. The natural world is a web of such exchanges. A tree receives gifts from the air, the sun and the ground; it returns gifts to animals and insects, humans, the air, the ground. In human society we receive from and give gifts to those we love and those who love us. Through a history of gift circulation, relationships are built and become strong. In Africa and elsewhere, gifts are traditionally seen as everyday occurrences, marking both special occasions—such as birth, marriage, achievement, death—and ordinary ones, such as a visit to a neighbor. Gift circulation functions as a continuous Jubilee, redistributing and leveling the wealth of the community.

This circulation of gifts involves three steps: the receiving, the transformation and the passing on of gifts. Mrs. Neufeld received gifts from MCC and others as a refugee. She transformed these gifts through her own labor into quilts and other gifts, which she then passed on to others. Likewise Hannah received the child Samuel from God. Through her labor of nurturing, symbolized by the period in which Samuel fed from her breasts, Hannah transformed the gift before returning it to God.

Everything is a divine gift: Similar stories of gifts and gift exchange fill the written and oral source materials of many religious traditions. It could be said that the circle of receiving, transforming and reciprocating gifts is what religion is about. Religion begins with the proposal that everything is a divine gift. The rest of the story unfolds from this point of departure. God's gifts are returned, through sacrifice or offering, or passed on to others. All of theology, all of religious ethics and morality concern themselves with how the divine gifts are received, transformed and reciprocated.

What is it that motivates the movement of gifts? Marcel Mauss, an early 20th-century French social anthropologist, concluded that the reason we feel the need to transform and pass on gifts is that gifts always contain something of the giver; in a sense they possess soul. Thus to give a gift to someone is to make a present of some part of oneself. When we accept something from another, we are accepting a part of the giver. That leaves an empty space in the giver that the receiver feels compelled to fill—compelled by the fact of one's own excess caused by the gift received. Psalm 23, a psalm of gratitude, reflects this aspect in the phrase "my cup overflows."

The Genesis stories show creation as, in a sense, "offsprung" from God; the soul, the creativity of God is in it; it is the expression of God's giftedness. Beyond this fundamental circle of Creator and created there is an infinite variety of smaller gift circles, between individuals and the divine, between and among peoples, ethnic groups, nations, clans, families and individuals, and in the natural world. All of these smaller circles are connected as offspring of the divine gift of creation and life.

The divine gift is at once general and specific. While the whole of creation is a gift from God to all, each part—or in the case of human beings, each person—is given specific and unique gifts as well. If all of creation were gifted in the same way, there would be no need for relationships. Without difference and diver-

If all of creation were gifted in the same way, there would be no need for relationships. Without difference and diversity, gifts cannot flow, and there can be no unity, no whole.

sity, gifts cannot flow, and there can be no unity, no whole. The distinctiveness of each part is essential to the promise and reality of oneness through relationship.

The receiving, transforming and reciprocating of gifts are like the flow of blood through the body; gifts are the blood of relationship. They create, sustain, repair and extend relationship.

From this perspective the purpose of gift giving is threefold. First of all, gifts express a desire for solidarity, community, relationship. This begins with God's desire to be in relationship through creation. In a similar way our gifts to others are a way of saying that we are or want to be a part of them.

Second, gifts express gratitude, relieving the sense of obligation that stems from our indebtedness for gifts we have received.

Third, gifts insure life and health. All gift circles strive to respond to the needs of each diverse part. As Lewis Hyde has written in *The Gift*: "The gift moves toward the empty place. As it turns in its circle it turns toward the one who has been empty-handed the longest."

Together this purpose is what we call love. If gifts are the blood of relatedness, love is the heart that propels gifts through the body. This love is expressed both as gratitude for the gifts received and as the desire to draw nearer in relationship.

Like blood, gifts must circulate. When gifts are not used in the creative purpose, not passed on, illness and death come to the relationship between the giver and the receiver. If we do not return gifts to the land, the rivers, the forests, the air, as well as to other human beings, our relationships with them become poisoned.

The debt of gratitude: It follows that the great enemy of gift is control. A gift becomes a commodity if it is subjected to ownership conditions by the giver or if the receiver denies the debt of gratitude by considering a gift received as property. In the New Testament Jesus is understood most fundamentally in terms of gift: "For God so loved the world that he gave ..." (John 3:16). Love propels God's gift to the whole world. But Jesus is not a commodity; we who have received him do not own him, cannot sell him or give him away subject to terms and conditions. He comes to us as gift and can only be passed on to others as gift, transformed by our understanding. And it is for those others to discover the soul, the life of that gift, in the context of their faith and life experience.

How is the theme of gift exchange relevant to mission in the context of the global church? In its broadest sense, mission is about building a web of closer relatedness—to God, to the environment, to other humans. And it is through the circulation of gifts that this relatedness happens, creating greater equality in the process.

Creative gifts of God and the webs of relatedness they engender have been extended to, and received by, all people; they are no less present and evident in the Kalahari as in Saskatoon, in Uzbekistan as in Utrecht. While Western missions in the past have used the term "unreached peoples" for groups and cultures where there is no church, we should remember that from God's perspective there is no such thing as an unreached people. Our task, and our opportunity, is to become part of the relationship God has already established with all people.

Creative gifts of God and the webs of relatedness they engender have been extended to, and received by, all people; they are no less present and evident in the Kalahari as in Saskatoon, in Uzbekistan as in Utrecht.

Mission is about us as much as it is about the other. It is more about releasing the gifts God has given us and becoming joined to others through gift exchange than it is about gathering others into our church or our theology. It is about our need to be one with the rest of God's creation; it is about our desire to transform the divine love we have experienced into new gifts. And it is about our longing to receive from other parts of God's creation a fuller understanding of who God is.

Tim Lind, Durban, South Africa, works with the Mennonite World Conference Global Gift Sharing Project and with the Mennonite Central Committee Africa Connecting Peoples activities.

End of the road for *Mennonite Your Way*?

Popular directory's current edition to be last for creators

Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.—Hebrews 13:2

MANHEIM, Pa.—After 24 years, will angels become unattended now that the *Mennonite Your Way Travel Directory* is in its last edition and project creators Leon and Nancy Stauffer are retiring from the enterprise? Will someone take it over? Or will Mennonites find new ways to connect, directory or no directory?

The Stauffers created the directory in 1976 to promote Christian hospitality. But with the growth of Mennonite Your Way Tours, which they started a year later, they no longer have the time to produce the directory.

"We've pampered it," Leon says. "Perhaps it has served its own day, or perhaps someone with a vision for continuing it will come forward."

During the time they put out the directory, the Stauffers have heard about conceivable angels appearing in all guises: young families on vacation, retired motorcycle buffs, honeymooners, community newcomers.

Even livestock. About 10 years ago, a Pennsylvania farmer was taking a truckload of animals to the Chicago stockyards when he broke down in Ohio. The farmer pulled out his dog-eared *Mennonite Your Way Travel Directory* to locate a nearby farm family willing to tend his cattle while a mechanic tended his truck.

"So many people have been creative in how they've used the directory," Nancy says.

The Stauffers developed a vision for the directory when their three children were young and Leon was working for Eastern Mennonite Missions in Salunga, Pa. The family wanted to travel to the 1975 Mennonite Church General Assembly in Eureka, Ill., but couldn't afford motels every night. They arranged to stay with friends along the way for part of the trip.

"The kids could go into the backyard and play while we visited with our friends," Leon recalls.

After several such positive experiences, the Stauffers wondered if other Mennonites might not enjoy giving and receiving similar fellowship on their travels. They mailed news releases to church publications and letters to congregations and soon received a deluge of responses.

Courtesy photo

Nancy and Leon Stauffer work on their *Mennonite Your Way Travel Directory.* Twenty-four years after they compiled the first edition, the Stauffers are giving up the directory, leaving its future in doubt.

"Nancy had put a quilt in her quilting frame, but within a couple of weeks we were getting 100 responses per day," Leon says. "We realized we had tapped into something that was wanting to happen."

Nancy's quilt may not have gotten sewn, but the Stauffers did stitch together a patchwork of 1,700 individuals and families throughout Canada and the United States willing to host fellow Anabaptist travelers. That first directory was published as an insert in *Festival Quarterly* magazine in 1976. The second edition, which had expanded to include international contacts, was also published in *Festival Quarterly.*

At its largest, the directory contained 2,300 Canadian and U.S. names, in addition to 280 contacts in 67 foreign countries. Most editions have averaged about 2,000 host names.

The directory grew to include articles about various locations, with an emphasis on the Anabaptist presence and historical highlights. The directory's composition also evolved as Christians from other denominations grew from 10 percent to 30 percent of the host names.

The Stauffers want to continue the directory's spirit of extended Christian fellowship with Mennonite Your Way Tours, which they turned into a full-time business in 1993. When a tour goes to the tulip festival in Pella, Iowa, for example, the group also visits Amish and Mennonite communities in the Kalona area. When in Alaska, tour participants share a fellowship meal with members of Prince of Peace Mennonite Church in Anchorage, the only Mennonite congregation in the state.—*Emily Will*

Travel directory built relationships

Nancy and Leon Stauffer, creators of the *Mennonite Your Way Travel Directory,* fear people may use the directory as just an inexpensive way to travel, ignoring the core philosophy of building Christian bonds.

Yet complaints throughout the years have been minimal. And each time the Stauffers have advertised for hosts for the next edition, Nancy says stories of new friendships and positive experiences pour in:

- One couple gave up their master bedroom for two honeymooners, warning them that their toddler would probably crawl into bed with them at some point. And the toddler did. There is no report on how that colored the newlyweds' ideas about having children of their own!
- One host was a bit surprised when their guests were motorcyclists. One of the bikers, however, was an accomplished pianist, and barriers and stereotypes dropped when the host family heard his playing. He later played a prelude at their church. It turns out the biker stopped to give recitals at nursing homes along the way.—*Emily Will*

Study: MCC workers lack church support

AKRON, Pa.—Only 21 percent of Mennonite Central Committee workers feel their home congregations are helpful and supportive of them in their MCC work, according to recent findings.

Mental health care workers and MCC alumni Evelyn and Karl Bartsch conducted the 1½ yearlong study of MCC worker care. Study results were reported to the MCC executive committee during its Dec. 10-11, 1999, meeting in Akron.

Karl Bartsch called the findings on congregational support "incredibly low." But committee member Donella Clemens said there was a logical explanation. "It's not surprising, considering many MCC workers come from college or other places that have taken them away from their local churches," she said.

The study, which involved 1,400 people, recommends that MCC encourage prospective workers to designate support groups from their home congregation or community.

Committee member Vidya Narmilla also observed the importance of workers getting involved in congregations in their service locations and "becoming part of the community."

The study also found that 23.6 percent of MCC's international country representatives and U.S. program coordinators suffer from high levels of stress. Country representatives and program coordinators are responsible for program planning and workers in their geographic areas.

Karl Bartsch said expectations regarding their administrative and pastoral functions are often unclear. "Country representatives are the focal point for requests and complaints, yet their roles are not clearly defined," he said.

The study recommends more training for country representatives and program coordinators. MCC's human resources department will implement the recommendations.

Executive committee members were also told that 1999 was a record-breaker, as $7 million worth of material resources was shipped during the year, compared with $3.1 million in assistance in 1998. Contributing to the record were 55,000 refugee kits to the Balkans, surpassing the previous mark of 52,000 relief buckets for Central America following Hurricane Mitch in 1998.

MCC also shipped large amounts of food overseas in 1999, although that could change this year. Canadian farmers have been generous donors to MCC's account at the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, which has enabled MCC to make its food shipments. But Elaine Peters of MCC's food, disaster and material resources department said flooding, high-priced inputs and low government subsides are creating a farming crisis.

"Fifty percent of western Canada farmers say if the situation doesn't improve, they will leave farming within two years," Peters said.

Two major changes are planned for 2000. The Global Family child-sponsorship program wants to more than double in size during the next five years, growing from the current 2,200 sponsors to 5,000. The Africa department plans a major "re-visioning" process to identify problem areas and recommend solutions.—*Pearl Sensenig of MCC News Service*

People of color focus of teacher program

With a diversity grant from the state department of education, Bluffton (Ohio) College and the Lima, Ohio, school system are embarking on a program to encourage people of color to enter and remain in teaching.

The region has a significant number of students from various racial /ethnic groups but a shortage of teachers from these groups, says Gayle Trollinger, Bluffton education professor and project coordinator.

The college will develop recruitment and retention initiatives, provide scholarships and offer education programs for prospective and current teachers. Lima schools will identify and recruit students to participate in precollege programs and intensify hiring efforts.

GCMC photo by Steve Plenert

Hands-on experience

Janet Plenert is ordained for service in North America by the Brazil Mennonite Church in a Dec. 4, 1999, ceremony in Ceilandia. After six years in Brazil with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, Plenert next month will become Latin America administrator for COM and MBM, working out of MBM's office in Elkhart, Ind. She had been executive secretary of the Brazil Mennonite Church's mission board. Plenert's husband, Steve, was also ordained. Participating in the ceremony was Jeni Hiett Umble (left), pastor of Southside Fellowship in Elkhart, where the Plenerts are members. Southside is a member of Indiana-Michigan and Central District conferences, and both will recognize the Plenerts' Brazil Mennonite Church credentials. Antonio Carlos de Faria (right), former president of the Brazil Mennonite Church, preached the ordination sermon. Umble also gave remarks during the sermon. "I emphasized the importance of the Brazilian church recognizing the gifts of ministry that Steve and Janet had developed during their service there," Umble says.

Kansas woman follows decades-old dream and her daughter into pastoral ministry

NEWTON, Kan.—It's not unheard of for a father to preach at the service where his son is licensed for pastoral ministry. Now, says Vicki Penner, she and her mother, Ruth, have turned that upside down.

Ruth, at age 61, was licensed Oct. 31, 1999, at First Mennonite Church in Hillsboro, Kan., where she is serving an interim pastorate. The sermon was given by Vicki, 31, the associate and youth pastor at Faith Mennonite Church in Newton, where she was ordained a year ago.

"Often children don't follow that closely in a parent's footsteps," Vicki says. "To have a daughter preaching at a mother's licensing is truly unusual because of gender and generation."

Ruth Eby had her first thoughts of the pastorate while growing up in Lancaster County, Pa. "I remember as a little girl reading a book called *Green Light,* about a pastor and what he did, and thinking, 'If I were a man, that's what I would do.' " she says. "But I wasn't, and so I never considered it."

> I remember as a little girl reading a book called *Green Light,* about a pastor and what he did, and thinking, "If I were a man, that's what I would do." But I wasn't, and so I never considered it.
>
> —*Ruth Penner*

Instead, Ruth earned a nursing degree at Goshen (Ind.) College in 1961. Two years later, she went to Hospital Albert Schweitzer in Deschappelles, Haiti. There she met Marv Penner, a farmer's son from Beatrice, Neb., who was doing his alternative service. They got married and moved back to Nebraska to farm. Ruth spent the next 25 years as a farmer's wife and part-time nurse, raising Vicki and Vicki's older brother, Larry.

Ruth began to think more and more about going to seminary, she says, but Beatrice was too far away from either Omaha, where there was a seminary, or North Newton, Kan., where the Western District Conference runs the Great Plains Seminary Extension Program.

In the early 1990s, the Penners decided to leave the farm. "The one thing I wanted was to be in a place where I could take seminary classes," Ruth says. So they decided to move to Wichita, Kan., and she started taking Great Plains classes. In 1998, she enrolled as a full-time student at United Methodist-affiliated St. Paul School of Theology in Kansas City, Mo.

"I still wondered about getting hired as a pastor," says Ruth, who still hopes to graduate from St. Paul. "When First Mennonite called me to be their interim, that was a real gift."

She sees interim pastoring as a specialty that greatly interests her. "It allows you to start and finish something," Ruth says. "And it's a way to show congregations that women can be ministers and the world won't come to an end. It's a good way for kids in high school to see it as a possibility. Moving from church to church spreads that message around."

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Vicki Penner, associate pastor of Faith Mennonite Church in Newton, Kan. (left), and her mother, Ruth Penner, who last year took her first pastorate, an interim position at First Mennonite Church in Hillsboro, Kan.

Unlike her mother, Vicki felt free to explore aspects of ministry. After graduating from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., in 1990 with a degree in social work, she did a term of voluntary service in Pittsburgh. Then she decided to attend Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian school.

"I liked the [Mennonite] church in Pittsburgh, and I didn't necessarily want to move and have to develop new relationships," Vicki says. "Also, I had grown up Mennonite and I wanted a more ecumenical perspective."

In addition, she says, she had begun dating Rich Minder, whom she eventually married.

"I still didn't necessarily think I was going into pastoral ministry," says Vicki, who has been at Faith for four years. "As I gained more skills and experience in preaching and leading worship, I became more confident. I began to see that many of the things I liked in social work—interaction with people, counseling, focus on the community—could be done by a pastor, too."

Even though the pastoral opportunities for Mennonite women have changed over the years, Ruth says, "Neither one of us was called out by the congregation, encouraged to go to seminary or think about being a pastor. We had to find the call on our own, and then we had to pursue it almost in spite of the church. There's not much affirmation while you're pursuing it. Maybe it comes afterward."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Christmas, Ramadan and U.S. Marines

Holiday gifts reach across boundaries of belief

DAMASCUS, Syria—For the second year in a row, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers in Syria marked Christmas and Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting, by brightening the lives of some disadvantaged children and youth with special gifts.

MCC workers are helping coordinate the collection of clothing, toys, school materials and toiletries for children at an orphanage and a day care, for young men at a juvenile prison and for children at a women's prison. In addition to meeting physical needs of people on the fringes of Damascus society, the children's bundles are a way for the various communities to work together.

"We were impressed with the tremendous goodwill in the different faith groups in Syria. And we often dreamed of a way to get the communities to serve Syrians together," says Jane Emile-Wagler, who helps direct MCC's Syria program. "The children's bundles seemed like a good place to start, and the responses were gratifying."

Seven church groups and many individuals contributed items. Even the tote bags for the bundles were a donation from the Syrian Orthodox community in al-Hasseke, about 310 miles from Damascus.

"We phoned Bishop Matta and told him about the bundles and our need for tote bags," Emile-Wagler says. "He told us to fax him the specifications for the bags that afternoon. We faxed him specifications based on some bags MCC uses for school and health kits.

"Two days later the Syrian Orthodox community in al-Hasseke sent a huge bundle in the mail with 180 freshly-sewn tote bags. Bishop Matta told us, 'We made a few improvements on your design, made it a shoulder bag, but otherwise everything is as you ordered it.' The generosity and quick response were overwhelming."

MCC Syria faced an unexpected dilemma while collecting toys for the bundles. A friend suggested contacting the U.S. Marines based at the U.S. embassy, since they were conducting their annual Toys for Tots drive. MCC personnel consulted with several local partners, and all of them felt comfortable with Marine participation, provided they came to the distributions as civilians out of uniform.

MCC personnel felt considerable ambiguity about requesting help from the Marines in a nonemergency situation. But based on local partners' counsel, MCC workers asked the Marines if they would like to contribute. They did so enthusiastically, even going over their initial budget to buy enough toys for each of the 180 bundles. Two Marines went along to the distribution at the orphanage.—*Eldon Wagler for MCC News Service*

We often dreamed of a way to get the communities to serve Syrians together.

—Jane Emile-Wagler

Alberta church disciplined over homosexuality issue

RED DEER, Alta.—Northwest Conference has placed Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church on restricted membership because of its acceptance of homosexuals. Eighty-three percent of conference delegates voted for the measure at a special meeting on Nov. 20, 1999, at Red Deer.

Calgary loses delegate privileges, and its members are ineligible for any conference position or to teach at any conference-sanctioned event. Calgary's status is to be reviewed at least every two years.

Prior to the meeting, all Northwest congregations had been asked to assess member sentiment. Members reported a high degree of support for restricted-member status for Calgary. Several congregations advocated terminating the conference's relationship with Calgary. Three of 20 congregations noted a significant percentage of people opposing discipline.

Earlier last year, the congregation lost its Mennonite Brethren membership but is still a member of the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta.—*Canadian Mennonite*

CASA photo for MCC News Service

Aid for India

Two children finish a bowl of rice in Orissa, eastern India, a region struggling to recover from a Oct. 29, 1999, cyclone that left 1 million people homeless. Mennonite Central Committee is providing rice in exchange for cleaning fields and rebuilding houses. MCC India staff are also assisting in rebuilding efforts. In addition, MCC is providing blankets, tarps and other relief items. The agency needs $200,000 for its response.

Longtime Mennonite publisher dies at 76

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—Ben Cutrell, for 27 years the top executive at Mennonite Publishing House (MPH) in Scottdale, died Dec. 26, 1999, in DeLand, Fla., following a long illness. He was 76.

Cutrell was named MPH general manager in 1961 and proceeded to give leadership to the development of the major curricula and magazines for the Mennonite Church. He helped develop cooperative publishing between Herald Press and Faith & Life Press in Newton, Kan., and publishing initiatives with other Mennonite-related groups. Cutrell also directed the Provident Bookstores chain in the United States and Canada. During his tenure, MPH sales grew from $2 million a year to $13 million a year.

After concluding his work at MPH in 1988, Cutrell and his wife, Dorothy, retired to DeLand. A memorial service was held Dec. 30 at the Mennonite Church of Scottdale.

New church's look to be proposed next month

KANSAS CITY, Mo.—A plan for the organizational structure for Mennonite Church USA will be presented for approval at the U.S. Executive Board's Feb. 17-20 meeting. The proposal will identify the structural components, their relationships with each other and foundational statements of values and procedures.

"We intend these documents to form the foundation blocks of clarity that program planners will need to continue building the various programs and other component parts of the new church," says U.S. transformation project director Jim Schrag.

The organizational structure was one of the agenda items for the 10-member U.S. Transformation Team at its Dec. 6, 1999, meeting in Kansas City. Among other items, the group received a preliminary proposal from the Education Integration Committee for a new education agency. The proposal will be revised after receiving more feedback from the schools, Transformation Team and Mennonite Church USA Executive Board.

Hesston baseball coach to be honored

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston (Kan.) College baseball coach Art Mullet has been named regional coach of the year for the National Junior College Athletic Association's Division II. He will be honored by the American Baseball Coaches Association at a Jan. 7 banquet in Chicago. Mullet's 1999 team won the NJCAA Division II Region VI championship to advance to the district playoffs, where the Larks were stopped one step short of the national tournament.

by the way ...

North American Mennonite Brethren are creating their first denominational adult Sunday school curriculum, to be used starting in fall 2000.
—Christian Leader

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Events

Pacific Southwest Conference midyear assembly, Feb. 4-5, Pasadena, Calif.
Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. annual meeting, Feb. 4-5, Grantham, Pa.
MCC annual meeting, Feb. 18-19, Hampton, Va.
MCC Central States annual meeting, Feb. 26, La Grulla, Texas

Births

Bender, Jayden Dakota, Dec. 11, to Gary and Patti (Becker) Bender, Tavistock, Ont.
Bitikofer, Rebekah Marie, Nov. 30, to Kerry and Mary (Vollmer) Bitikofer, Shippensburg, Pa.
Cross, Hannah Noel, Dec. 8, to Dannelle (Sautter) and Jason Croll, Telford, Pa.
Eastman, Kendrick Lowell, Nov. 9, to Lowell and Rachelle (Denlinger) Eastman, Fulks Run, Va.
Gerber, Kayla Elizabeth, Dec. 4, to Lisa and Troy Gerber, Harrisonburg, Va.
Hamsher, Carrie Anne, Dec. 15, to Kristina (Zendt) and Matthew Hamsher, Sugarcreek, Ohio.
Hershberger, Katherine Grace, Dec. 11, to Louise (Smucker) and Terry Hershberger, Orrville, Ohio.
Horst, Brett Austin, Nov. 11, to Brian and Rita (Martin) Horst, Chambersburg, Pa.
Keener, George Dillon, Dec. 9, to David and Joylynn (Heese Martin) Keener, Lancaster, Pa.
McFarland, Jayden Townsley, Dec. 10, to John and Mabel (Meck) McFarland, Harrisonburg, Va.
Nofziger, Calvin Harley, Dec. 7, to Becky (Stuckey) and Jon Nofziger, Stryker, Ohio.
Shupe, Braden Neil, Nov. 10, to April (Showers) and Brad Shupe, Sugarcreek, Ohio.
Simms, Sabrina Marie, Nov. 4, to Christine (Bethtel) and Robert Simms Jr., Granger, Ind.
Sonexay, Jason, Oct. 25, to Aedto and Phonexay Sonexay, Harrisonburg, Va.
Weaver, Stuart Anthony, Oct. 26, to Diane and Jonathan Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.
Wenger, Brendan Anthony, Feb. 27, 1999, received for adoption Dec. 14 by Lynelle (Sollenberger) and Jeffrey Wenger, Landisville, Pa.
Yoder, Kent Owen, Dec. 7, to Brenda (Lazzaro) and Ron Yoder, Shipshewana, Ind.

Marriages

Fiala/Schweitzer: Lance Fiala, Strang, Neb., and Dana Schweitzer, Shickley, Neb., Nov. 6 at United Methodist Church, Geneva, Neb.
Graber/Hartzler: Matthew Graber, Millersburg, Ind., and Monica Hartzler, Goshen, Ind., Dec. 11 at Griner Conservative Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.
Koogler/Martin: Barry Koogler, Fairfax, Va., and Farrah Martin, Harrisonburg, Va., Nov. 27 at Ridgeway Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Miller/Taveras: Matthew Miller, Freeman, S.D., and Digna Taveras, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, Nov. 27 at Santo Domingo.

Deaths

Beasley, Mayda Pearl Williams, 91, Elkton, Va., died Oct. 19. Spouse: Arthur Beasley (deceased). Survivor: daughter Janet Roach. Funeral: Oct. 22 at Beldor Mennonite Church, Elkton.
Becker, Esther, 80, Aberdeen, Idaho, died Nov. 29 from complications of diabetes. Parents: Peter and Anna Boese Becker (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 3 at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen.
Goering, Elma Helene Kaufman, 93, Moundridge, Kan., died Oct. 1. Spouse: Pete Goering (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Mary Rose Kaufman (deceased). Survivors: children Robert, Lyle; seven grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 4 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.
Johns, Joseph, 85, Davidsville, Pa., died Nov. 3 of cancer. Parents: Joseph and Annie Johns (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 6 at Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, Pa.
Klassen, Albert Dale, 68, Chicago, died Oct. 18. Parents: Albert and Agatha Hiebert Klassen (deceased). Survivors: children Teresa, Jean Klassen-Davis, Eric, Rachel Retrum; seven grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 22 at Oak Park Mennonite Church, Chicago.
Lehman, Martha Martin, 96, Chambersburg, Pa., died Dec. 9. Spouse: Howard Lehman (deceased). Parents: David and Mary Horst Martin (deceased). Survivors: children Lewis, Martha Frey, Eleonora Martin, Jean Hampton, Cora; 20 grandchildren; 39 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 13 at Chambersburg Mennonite Church.
Peachey, Roy, 89, Belleville, Pa., died Dec. 9. Spouse: Elsie Glick Peachey. Parents: Gideon and Sadie Speicher Peachey (deceased). Other survivors: children Arlene Byler, Marjorie Laughlin, Robert; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 12 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.
Reimer, Elizabeth Bookwalter, 87, Beatrice, Neb., died Nov. 29. Spouse: Henry Reimer. Parents: John and Minerva Laird Bookwalter (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 3 at Beatrice Mennonite Church.
Schrag, Aldina Preheim, 96, Freeman, S.D., died Oct. 20. Spouse: Charles Schrag (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Maria Preheim (deceased). Survivors: children Duane, Shirley Waltner, Donna Smith, Flora Skillern, Mae Nelson; 10 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 23 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.
Schrag, Erwin, 82, Freeman, S.D., died Oct. 28 of a heart attack. Spouse: Vera Clocksin. Parents: Elias and Anna Schrag (deceased). Other survivors: children Ruth Gilbert, Stephan, Anne Sanchez, David; six grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 1 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.
Seeley, Johnny, 74, Enid, Okla., died Dec. 13. Spouse: Virginia Lenox Seeley. Parents: Lincoln and Rosa Howell Seeley (deceased). Other survivors: son David. Funeral: Dec. 18 at Grace Mennonite Church, Enid.
Sprunger, Lillian May Lantz Rich, 102, Bluffton, Ohio, died Nov. 29. Spouse: (1st) Rufus Rich (deceased); (2nd) Milton Sprunger (deceased). Parents: Milo Plank and Lydia Ropp Lantz (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Lois Smucker, Mary Blosser; 10 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 5 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.
Stoudt, Susan Keeler, 68, Franconia, Pa., died Dec. 12 of cancer. Spouse: Curtis Stoudt. Parents: Alvin and Addie Keeler (deceased). Other survivors: children Linda Sue Boll, Mary Lou Metzler; seven grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 19 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.
Stutzman, Erma, 86, Sarasota, Fla., died Dec. 1. Spouse: Ernest Stutzman (deceased). Parents: Alton and Malinda Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Ellen Shrock, Wayne, David, Gary; nine grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 4 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

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classifieds

- **Friendship Community** seeks full-time ***houseparents*** for adults with developmental disabilities in Lancaster County, Pa. Housing and salary provided. Also full- and part-time adviser positions available in group homes. Applicants must be at least 18 years old and possess a high school diploma or equivalent. Call 717-656-2466. EOE

- **Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute** invites applications for the position of ***principal*** to begin July 2000. MBCI has a student body of 560 (grade 7 to senior IV) and a professional staff of 40 teachers.

  Address inquiries and applications by Feb. 29 to Search Committee, 180 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E8; 204-667-8210; fax 204-661-5091; email mbcis@mbnet.mb.ca

- **Mennonite Voluntary Service unit** of Topeka, Kan., needs a ***compact pickup truck*** for work with urban gardens in low-income and culturally diverse neighborhoods. Mechanically sound, reliable vehicle desired to haul compost, small tiller, various other garden tools and supplies to community gardens, and to provide local transportation for MVSers. Will travel to retrieve, if necessary. Call Southern Hills Mennonite Church, 785-266-9403.

- **Second Mile** peace curriculum is seeking a ***graphic designer*** to work on a contract basis. Responsibilities include design and layout for all components. Bulk of work will be in fall 2000, some in summer 2001. Applicants are to submit a portfolio. Short-listed applicants will be asked to provide sample design. Apply by Feb. 15, 2000.

  For more information, contact Doug Krehbiel, 316-283-5100; email dougk@gcmc.org. Second Mile materials will help congregations proclaim and be signs of Christ's peace in a broken world.

Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia

Mennonite Central Committee British Columbia seeks applications for the position of:

Executive Director

The Executive Director is the chief executive officer of Mennonite Central Committee BC.

All applicants must exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active membership in a Mennonite or Brethren in Christ church, and nonviolent peacemaking.

The Search Committee will begin reviewing applications after Feb. 28, 2000 until the position is filled.

Please direct inquiries to chair of the Search Committee:
Mark Charlton - (604) 855-3491 or
charlton@twu.ca.

Please direct applications to:
Mark Charlton
Executive Director Search Committee
c/o Mennonite Central Committee BC
Box 2038, 31414 Marshall Road
Abbotsford, BC V2T 3T8
Fax: (604) 850-8734

by Rich Preheim

The really important stuff

With all the hoopla around the new year (and new century and new millennium?), it seems everyone has been doing a Santa Claus impersonation lately: They are making lists and checking them at least twice. The result is a sleighful of compilations of the best and worst of seemingly everything of the past 100 or 1,000 years. To that list of listmakers now add the U.S. public TV show *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly,* which has named its top 10 religion stories of the millennium. The show's selections, in chronological order and reprinted in *The United Church Observer,* are:

- The split of Christianity in 1054 into Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism;
- The Crusades (1095 to the end of the 13th century);
- The spread of Islam, culminating in the capture of Istanbul in 1453;
- The publication of the Bible in 1455 by printing press inventor Johannes Gutenberg;
- Church support of arts, music and intellectual life in the European Renaissance;
- Martin Luther's posting of the 95 Theses in 1517;
- Worldwide missionary movements from the 16th to 19th centuries;
- The religious liberty movement in England, leading to the founding principle in the United States that government should not interfere with religion;
- Nineteenth-century challenges to religious ideas by thinkers such as Darwin, Freud and Marx;
- Centuries of anti-Semitic persecution in Europe, culminating in the Holocaust.

A dove among the hawks

Maybe, just maybe, there is a glimmer of hope for a violence-wracked world after all. In a fantastic political development, South African Quaker and pacifist Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge has been named her country's deputy minister of defense.

"The first thing I did when I received the offer was fall to my knees and pray," Madlala-Routledge tells *Quaker Life.* "The second was to call my husband and discuss the news."

She had been a member of Parliament since 1994 and spent time in prison for her anti-apartheid activism. Madlala-Routledge's vision for the next five years includes reducing weapons proliferation, confronting the arms industry and promoting conflict-resolution skills.

But Madlala-Routledge's new position leaves observers wondering if she can change the institution or if the institution will change her. She will have to face political realities of publicly going along with decisions such as a recent $4.8 million military procurement deal. Madlala-Routledge says, however, that she is ready to provide another voice to the internal government debates.

"I have never met a Quaker who thought that sitting and meditating would solve the world's problems," she says.

The cross and the swastika

What delicious, miraculous irony. In 1941, Nazi leader and Hitler associate Martin Bormann wrote, "The influence of the church must be completely eliminated." In 1958, his son, also named Martin, became a Catholic priest and spent many years as a missionary in Congo.

Bormann the son, now 69, has been working to undo some of the damage caused by his infamous father and his cronies, reports *National Catholic Reporter.* Bormann was baptized as an infant; his godfather was none other than Hitler. But religious faith and practice presumably were missing in action during World War II. After the fall of the Third Reich, Bormann was sent to Austria to live with a foster family, which reintroduced him to Christianity.

In addition to his mission work, Bormann also was a religious educator in Austria. Now retired, he is instrumental in a group that brings together children of both Holocaust sufferers and perpetrators. The idea is to see if the second generation can begin to heal the wounds of the first. Bormann is also the only child of a high-ranking Nazi to go to Israel and express sorrow for the Holocaust.

Pieces of the pie

Here is something that probably doesn't come as much of a surprise to a lot of church treasurers: Per member giving to U.S. congregations as a portion of income dropped in 22 of the 30 years between 1968 and 1997. Giving in 1997 slipped to 2.56 percent, says Empty Tomb, a Christian research and service organization, in its recently released *The State of Church Giving Through 1997.* In 1968, per member congregational giving was 3.12 percent of income. Empty Tomb says the 1997 percentage was lower than in 1933, at the depth of the Great Depression.

Empty Tomb studied more than 30 Protestant groups, including the Mennonite Church.

Tidbits

- **There have been 29 Chinese Bible translations since 1700.—*Amity News Service***
- **The average congregation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America spends 88 percent of its annual budget on operating expenses and debt reduction.—*The Lutheran***
- **In 1900, there were 10 million Christians in Africa. In 2000, there will be more than 400 million. —*The Other Side***
- **In addition to the United States, countries with Peace Tax Fund campaigns include Australia, Belgium, Canada, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom and Zambia. —*National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund***
- **Ten percent to 15 percent of U.S. military personnel attend church or chapel. —*Holiness Today***

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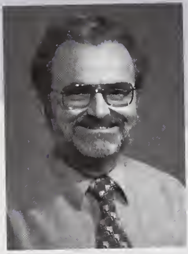

J. Lorne Peachey

We've come a long way—and have a long way to go

Last year was the 100th anniversary of overseas mission for the Mennonite Church (MC). This year it's 100 years in overseas mission for the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC). So this publication has chosen to mark the change in centuries by having our last issue for 1999 and the first for 2000 focus on missions.

Partly because of these GC-MC efforts, along with those of other groups, Mennonites today number more than one million scattered in 60 countries around the world. Not bad for a church that had obscure origins in the 16th century and, because of persecution and a minority status, kept mostly to itself for centuries.

Mission is just one cause for celebration as we change millennia. Another is the fact that we have also done well in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and healing the sick. Mennonite hospitals and schools are leaders in health care and education around the world. Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Disaster Service have become common names, not only in our own households but also in those of many of our global neighbors.

Both our successes and our failures should take us humbly into the future. Past success tells us that our dreams are possible. Past failure reminds us that only as we acknowledge our brokenness can God use us.

But we have done more than plant churches and minister to human needs. We have also learned to interact with our culture. We have given visibility to the way of peace in human relations through numerous peace and justice efforts, such as Christian Peacemaker Teams. We have also popularized the idea of more-with-less, making it widespread enough so that simple living and Mennonites are often mentioned in the same breath, at least in some circles.

Yet as we celebrate, we Mennonites must also acknowledge that we still have a long way to go to achieve the dreams and live the life to which God's Spirit calls us.

Though the Mennonite church is now an international body, much of its wealth, i.e., power, is in the hands of the North and the West. "In this era of globalization we … are called to provide space that makes power-sharing possible," Mesach Krisetya, president of Mennonite World Conference, said recently in an address to that body's executive committee. "How can we as a global body meet this need?"

For North American Mennonites, part of the answer will mean giving up. The decades ahead will provide challenges from other parts of our world to the power, wealth and prestige to which we have become accustomed. This will be a painful process, one demanding our best skills if we would be faithful to God's vision for an international church.

The future will also challenge us to deal responsibly with the structures we have developed to take care of ourselves and to work together around the world. One of the reasons GC-MC merger is so difficult is because of the intricate structural systems of both groups. For the future we need to simplify the ways we organize ourselves, focusing less on our needs and more on our mission, as Wilbert Shenk reminds us (see page 4).

But our greatest challenge will come as we face the influences of our society and disagree about how to respond. In the past century alone we had the modernist-fundamentalist controversy, then the "communist threat," followed by draft dodgers and peaceniks. Later it was divorce and remarriage, then women in leadership. Today it's homosexuality and membership. The issues and the players change, but too many of the ways we respond to disagreements stay the same: name-calling, distrust, splits, anger, hatred. We who want to be known as people of peace have work to do to realize that peace among ourselves.

For Mennonites, both our successes and our failures should take us humbly into the future. Past success tells us that it is possible to become "communities of grace, joy and peace," as we dream in Vision: Healing and Hope. Past failure reminds us that only as we acknowledge our own brokenness can we become agents of "God's healing and hope to the world." It is God who brought us thus far on this journey. It is God who will be with us on the road ahead.—*jlp*

the Mennonite
January 11, 2000

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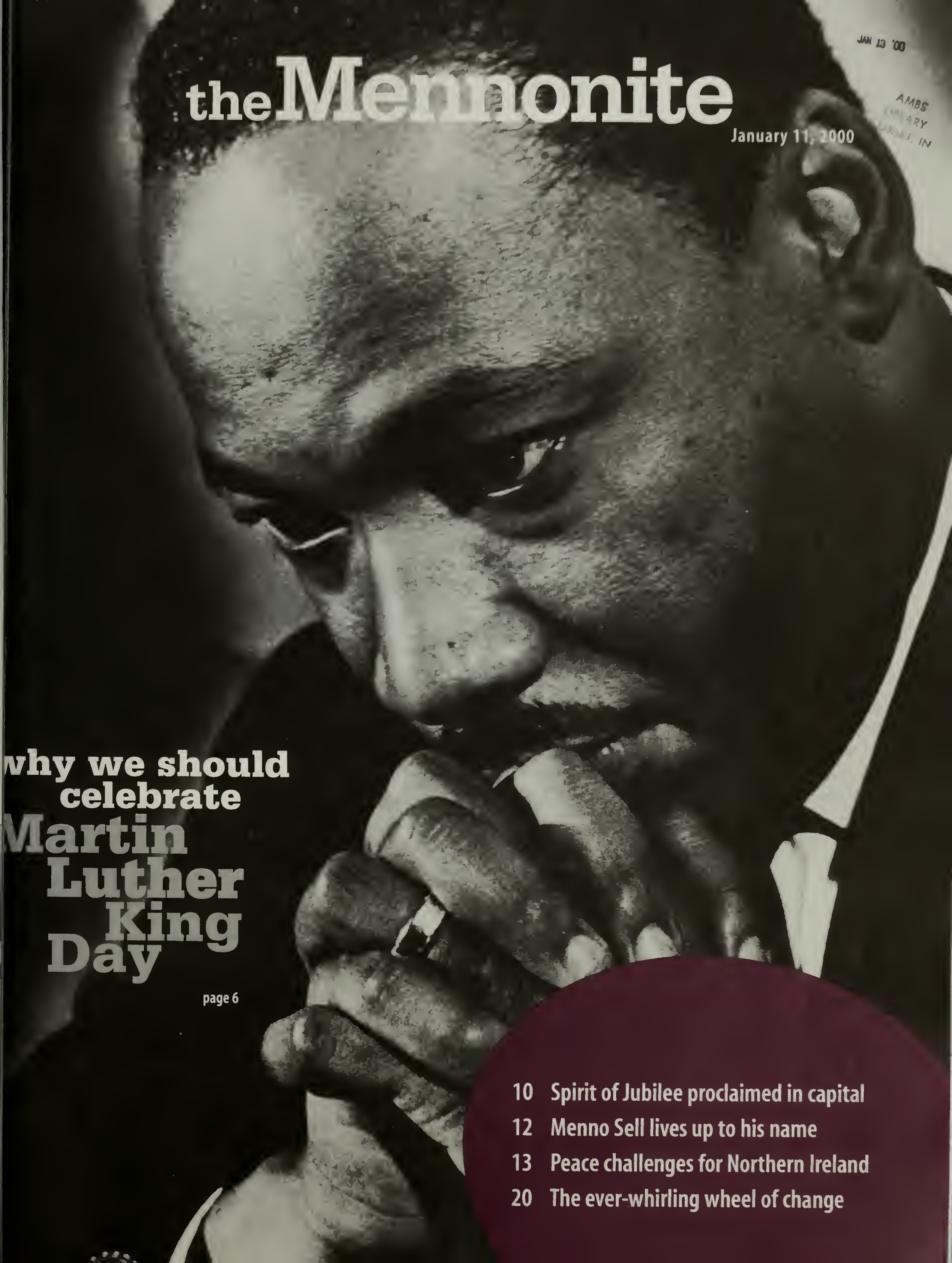

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

A look at Mary

I want to thank you for publishing the poem "Mary Looks Back" (Dec. 14). For some reason, I paid more attention to Mary this Christmas, and this poem gave me yet another view. In the past I may have ignored Mary because she seemed a passive doormat, not someone I wanted to emulate. Furthermore, she was the Catholics' saint, not someone Mennonites mentioned much. But I've realized I have much to learn from her about trusting God and doing the hard things. Thanks also to Ingrid Hess for the evocative drawing.—*Donna Detweiler, Albuquerque, N.M.*

Praying against evil

I am writing in response to the article on a portion of the Eastern Mennonite Mission Thailand team praying at a Buddhist temple ("Breaking Bondage, Lifting Oppression," Nov. 16). Some questions have been raised as to whether this is appropriate. First, I want to express my appreciation for carrying the news release. Second, I want to say that this is an activity that I believe has a place in cooperating with the will of God in bringing the kingdom of God to places where the Evil One has had a stronghold for many years.

Let me hold up that, when carried out appropriately, as was done in this case, there is utmost sensitivity given to the people who are there to worship. Nothing would work against the purposes more in most cases than to have attention drawn to this intercession work. But out of the heart of love that God has placed in us, we are obligated to expose the deceptive forces of the Evil One in the spirit realm, which are falsely using the gods of the temple to gain worship to themselves (1 Corinthians 10:20). Clearly the struggle is not against the people, or even the religion (Buddhism in this case) but against the powers of the Evil One which hold the land and people in a deceptive grip.

The praying is done with a sensitivity to God and to the culture and religious system, blending in for the most part by, for example, praying with eyes open and worshiping God through proclamations or singing quietly and unobtrusively. The purpose is for the spirits of darkness and for our God of light to hear, not to garner responses or interaction from a human plane.

It is my conviction that God desires all people to walk in the forgiveness and freedom of Jesus. Thus I both participate in and encourage others to engage in on-site prayers of faith and declarations of God's truth to the kingdom of evil wherever we have access to the places where the deception seems to be held most strongly. This is not done flippantly, lightly or disrespectfully but in a belief that this is part of what it means to take a stand against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 6:11,12).—*Glenn Kauffman, Eastern Mennonite Missions interim Asia director, Hong Kong*

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann

HI, PONTIUS. GOING TO THE BIG FOOTBALL GAME ?
NOPE. HEADING TO CHURCH.
BUT THE TEAM'S STRUGGLING. THE COACH SAID THIS IS A MUST SUNDAY.
UNFORTUNATELY THE PASTOR SAID THE SAME THING ABOUT MY SPIRITUAL LIFE.

Murder and miracles

I am a Christian called to love people, not judge them. I must be in the wrong church. I am hurt by the assaultive, murderous talk I find in the letters of people addressing their wish to deny inclusive membership of homosexual people and the congregations that accept them. Every time I hear or read marginalized speech such as "those people" and "people like them" and sometimes even the word "homosexual," I am aware of a small murder being committed. The group mentioned is cut away, excluded, denied its voice and dehumanized a portion more by the us-them style of reference. I regard this as murder, a lesson I extrapolated from Jesus when he warned his followers about revilement and calling someone a fool.

Worse is when these righteous bear false witness of their gay neighbors and speak falsely of "them" and "their lifestyle" and "agenda." I remember hearing of a "Jewish agenda" and a "black agenda," too. I find it close to criminal when people pull Jesus out of their hat to back up their pet views. I thought the Bible should read people, not the other way around. Consequently, shouldn't folks be encouraged to love God with all their heart, mind and strength and their neighbors as themselves? Must it be so hard to admit we don't know everything? That maybe Jesus isn't following in our parade? Can we be patient with God's sense of timing and trust the Spirit's relationship with a person? Whatever hap-

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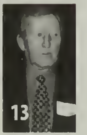
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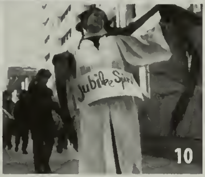

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y readers say

pened to the patience needed to watch a sown seed germinate?

If we must bar someone for unrighteousness, I suggest we bar membership to individuals and congregations who accept people who adopt and allow practice of a materialistic lifestyle. Or are there too many of them to be as convenient a target as gays?—*Kath Dudek, San Francisco*

When I found out my church had accepted an atheist as a member, I laughed like Sarah. John, a gentle and honest family man, served faithfully on an important commission. His work was greatly appreciated in the community. Many years later he finally came to Jesus. Perhaps he could find no other explanation of our steady acceptance of him except by some divine intervention. Encouraged by the honesty of this doubting Thomas, our own faith journey deepened and we were all blessed.

Meanwhile, the few gay people among us, tiring of our endless discussions on homosexuality, left one by one. One evening, a lesbian couple I had not seen in church in some months told me that the Mennonite minister who officiated at their wedding asked them not to say anything about it publicly. (The pastor was seeking a district-level position.) Less than a year later, the two women separated. One of them kept in touch with me, and I was amazed by her faith. Mine would have perished under the weight of so many insensitive words from Christians and so much love lost.

I keep wondering what miracles God would work in our congregations if we upheld our gay friends with as much kind respect as my church showed to John the atheist. What does it matter to uphold standards when we fail to uphold the people we care about?—*Donna L. Williams, Bozeman, Mont.*

Cover photo
by Tony Spina

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by Teruko
Anderson-Jones

Qualifications for sainthood

You can recognize them at a glance:
other parents, with that defining
look of tired patience.
It comes from the time spent
sitting in a car with the engine cut,
waiting for children;
tonight, a busload of them,
forty-five minutes late.
We become shapes
in a parking lot full of silent metal;
a million other things
we could be doing, but wouldn't.
Parenthood must be
a qualification for sainthood
in another realm, where things
like freezing in the darkness matter.
And distant headlights
would be like looking at the eyes of God,
coming home.

Teruko Anderson-Jones lives in Newtonville, Ont.

The call to courage

Why one white Mennonite woman celebrates Martin Luther King Day

by Patricia Lehman McFarlane

The white man presenting our mission moment gestured toward the Central American man who had been standing patiently in the left aisle. "He is one of the people this church assisted when he arrived in this country 10 years ago," he said. As the Central American man moved toward the platform, it became apparent that some misunderstanding was in process, and I along with the other 300 members of my congregation were about to become witnesses.

The guest speaker became uncomfortable, as did the missions committee member who had been interviewing him. Clearly the Central American man assumed he was about to be included in the interview. The guest presenter did not know what to do, and the missions committee member did not know what to do.

Genuine acceptance and inclusion has come more slowly to the Mennonite church because we need to overcome not only individual and institutional racism but also a strong ethnic pride and exclusiveness.

Finally the pastor stepped to the platform, also uncertain of what to do. I watched in dismay as our pastor led this man of color off the platform and explained that he would be talking in one of the Sunday school classes later for those who wanted to hear him.

I had just witnessed an example of institutional racism. This visitor of color had been left voiceless in a situation where, no matter what misunderstanding about presentation might have occurred, a white Mennonite would have been invited to say a few words.

This moment exemplifies why I, as well as many people of color in the Mennonite church and throughout our country, need to celebrate Martin Luther King Day. It is a day to remember the life of a man who worked against great odds to bring equality to all. His life and the lives of others who worked with him give me courage to face the continuing racism and exclusion in our society and in the Mennonite church.

I celebrate Martin Luther King Day because such celebration gives me courage to (1) be uncomfortable, (2) acknowledge the current situation, (3) call for change, (4) forgive and (5) dream.

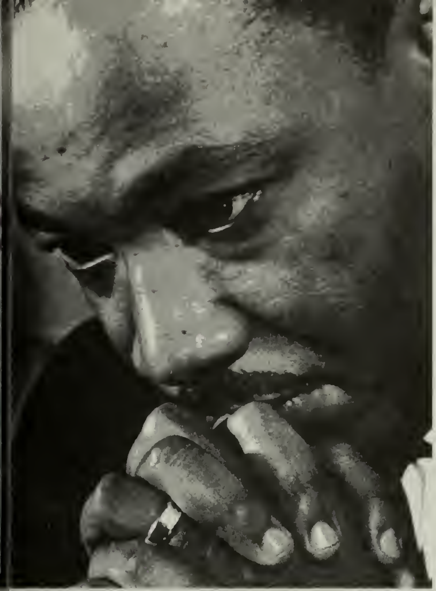
1. Courage to be uncomfortable: The discomfort our congregation experienced that Sunday morning must happen for change to occur. When I first moved to Goshen, Ind., after working and teaching in southern California, I attended a diversity conference in a local church. I noticed that as soon as we became even the least bit uncomfortable, the leader went in a different direction. When I questioned him, he said he watched his audience as he spoke, and when he saw the white people becoming uncomfortable, he changed his message. Having just arrived from an urban, multicultural environment, I could not have disagreed more. We must face our individual and institutional racism in a direct way.

2. Courage to confront the current situation in our society and in the Mennonite church: During the summer of 1998, I learned that racism—institutional and otherwise—has often become more devious and underground.

I served as the Goshen (Ind.) College faculty member on the Overground Railroad seminar. With faculty and students from five other colleges, we traveled throughout the South, following the path of the civil rights movement and hearing the stories of those who had been involved.

In Selma, Ala., our tour guide told us that much yet too little had changed since the march across the Edmund Pettis Bridge. While that Sunday in 1965 had shown the nation to itself in a powerful way as TV cameras captured marchers being brutally beaten by police officers, we learned that racism is still strong in Selma. The same mayor who vilified Martin Luther King Jr. on television remains in control of the city.

Institutional racism is strong in the Mennonite church as well. Although a few individual Mennonites became involved with the civil rights movement, the Mennonite church led no concerted, active effort to bring about social change. Guy F. Hershberger in his third edition of *War, Peace and Nonresistance* (1969)



wrote, “Nonresistants cannot take part in pressure campaigns, in strikes, in picketing or in devices designed to compel others to do justice to the Negro or to the Japanese.”

Genuine acceptance and inclusion have come slowly to the Mennonite church because we need to overcome not only individual and institutional racism but also a strong ethnic pride and exclusiveness. This ethnocentrism often renders both non-Germanic white Americans and people of color as “other.” The silent violence of exclusion practiced by some ethnic Mennonites is a sword we have not yet beaten into a plowshare.

In our 20-plus years of connection with the Mennonite Church, my husband and I have noticed the beginnings of positive change. Such change seems to occur first in missionary work, health care and education—areas where women were first permitted to consider legitimate vocations.

Few people of color, however, hold business and professional positions in areas of power within our church agencies—accountants or investment managers, heads of strategic planning committees, directors of marketing and public relations departments, treasurers or vice presidents of finance, attorneys or editors. These positions of power continue to be reserved for white Mennonites while Mennonites of color work primarily in the service sector of our institutions. An African Mennonite friend, Fred Kisare, who serves as a vice president in a large U.S. bank, said, “Mennonite jobs depend on who you know, and minorities do not know the right people. Where I work today, all I need to do is perform, and I am able to advance. In Mennonite institutions, whether you perform or you don’t perform, the deciding factor is connections.”

Martin Luther King’s life and the lives of others who worked with him give courage to face the racism and exclusion in our society and in the Mennonite church.

My Jamaican-American husband, a journalist and advertising copywriter, can work most safely in a secular company where performance rather than who one knows mandates advancement. Ideas can be threatening, and when a minority writer suggests that a new marketing approach may be stronger than an old one, white power can be easily threatened.

In one Mennonite institution two African-Americans working in the same department said they were often sidelined, denied information they needed to do their work well, then criticized because they did not know the information. Both later discovered, when comparing notes, that their supervisor sometimes began a new job assignment with the words, “Now I would be scared to do this if I were you.” This happened in the 1990s, not the 1960s. One of these African-Americans is pursuing a doctorate. The other is working with Fortune 500 companies, serving them from the company where he now holds the top position in his field.

Genuine acceptance and inclusion has come more slowly to the Mennonite church because we need to overcome not only individual and institutional racism but also a strong ethnic pride and exclusiveness.

In her essay “A Slow Walk of Trees,” writer Toni Morrison reports the same sort of inequality faced by her grandfather, whom she describes as “not only an artist but a first-rate carpenter and farmer, reduced to sending home to his family money he made playing the violin because he was not able to find work. And this during the years when almost half the black population were skilled craftsmen who lost their jobs to white ex-convicts and immigrant farmers.”

Morrison goes on to describe black people today: “Most of us are plagued by a sense of

continued on next page

The Call to Courage

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being worn shell-thin by constant repression and hostility as well as the impression of being buoyed by visible testimony of tremendous strides." This tension is present in the Mennonite church as well.

An easy test tells me whether a Mennonite institution or agency struggles with institutional racism. I look at a photo of their executive board and of their vice presidents. If these photos reveal no people of color or only one, institutional racism is entrenched there. I remain unimpressed by other minority numbers within the institution.

3. Courage to face the current situation in our society and in the Mennonite church without losing hope: Celebrating Martin Luther King Day helps me gain the courage to call for significant changes. We need to prepare a public statement confessing the individual and institutional racism in our church, asking forgiveness of our brothers and sisters of color for the many wrongs we have allowed to go unnoticed and unchanged.

The Southern Baptist Convention prepared such a statement in June 1995, a model we might follow. This statement says in part: "We genuinely repent of racism of which we have been guilty, whether consciously or unconsciously. We ask forgiveness from our African-American brothers and sisters, acknowledging that our own healing is at stake."

I dream of a day when all Mennonite churches, agencies and institutions will be fully integrated, with members of color and white members sharing positions at all levels of their organizations.

We should also establish a Mennonite Committee for Racial Equality to monitor fair employment, enrollment or admission and housing practices in the Mennonite church and its agencies. I propose a five-member committee made up of three people of color and two white members. (These members may need to be employed outside the church so that decisions they make are not impacted by fear for their jobs.)

Church institutions, agencies and individuals would then have the opportunity to register with the Mennonite church, stating their intent to treat people of color equally with white people. An individual of color who feels he or she is being treated differently in the workplace, school or in rental or real estate transactions because of not being white could bring the case before this committee, which would have power to investigate and call for specific action if probable cause of racism is uncovered. It would thus function as a churchwide equal employment opportunity commission. A church institution not willing to comply with the findings and recommendations of this committee would no longer be listed as a safe agency.

A newly established mutual aid organization within the church should also help victims of racism cover the costs resulting from their mistreatment—lost salary and retirement benefits or health-care coverage, for example. The Mennonite Committee for Racial Equality would determine reasonable amounts. Mennonite church members who experience racism in secular jobs could also appeal for financial help from this committee, particularly if they choose not to sue their employer after permission to do so has been granted by the U.S. Equal Opportunity Employment Commission. This monitoring of our own institutions and willingness to put our money where our mouth is would be a powerful testimony to the secular world and to other denominations.

4. Courage to forgive: Although our biracial family has met more active racism within the Mennonite Church than anywhere else, I am not off the hook as a Christian because we have been victimized by fellow believers. The words of the old hymn—"Did you sue for grace, my brother (sister), that you might forgive another, who has crossed your way?"—remind me to pray for those who have wronged me or my family, remembering that their pain may be greater than my own.

5. Courage to dream: Like Martin Luther King Jr., I have a dream. I dream of a day when all Mennonite churches, agencies and institutions will be fully integrated, with members of color and white members sharing positions at all levels of their organizations. I dream of a day when the term "integration" will mean that our global Mennonite church is truly united in Christ. I dream of a day when my children will not be identified first by their ethnic background but as members of a global Mennonite church family. Most of all, I dream of heaven come to earth as we celebrate here a foretaste of that moment we look forward to, brothers and sisters joining hands around God's throne.

Patricia Lehman McFarlane lives in Goshen, Ind.

A strange, familiar place

Reflections on a visit to Hebron from a Native community in Canada

by Eric Frey

I am not from this neighborhood. Neither am I from this country. I am not of this side of the globe. I am from a quiet place, a place of green and of water, a place of fish and forests, a land ill with knots of history, a past illness lingering still, a land in stark contrast to this place of desert and stone.

A Native elder told me one day, in conversation over tea, that we are children, all of one Creator. Children of the four directions, of the four races of the earth. Children born of broad spirit and mind, in different lands. Distant lands.

She explained that we were born into the world to bring gifts to one another, gifts from inside the broad mind, the broad spirit. We were to bring the gift of respect to the land, the gift of wisdom to our children and the gift of love to our neighbor. We were to bring food to another who had none. We were to bring forgiveness for those who stole fish from the fire. And we were to gather comfort for those whose kin had passed back to the Creator, to the earth in which we started.

Quite a conversation over a simple cup of tea. This moved me. Even without any Christian theological background this person seemed to embody everything I believe God intends for the world, everything I have learned through Christian teaching.

As I experienced Hebron one night, my second day here as a visitor with Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), I saw a world not unlike the one in which I work—one just as overburdened with oppression, anger, hate, fear, jealousy and greed. I saw a people divided in belief, quibbling over who will be the Creator's favored children.

On night patrol with CPT workers Joshua Yoder and Natasha Krahn, I walked headlong into a prime example. We had spent the evening observing fascinating, uncommonly friendly relations between Palestinians and soldiers, settlers and Palestinians, settlers and ourselves as well as soldiers and ourselves.

Almost instantly the night changed dramatically, frighteningly. We came upon a group of soldiers, maybe 12 or more, beating and kicking two young Palestinian men, for what reason we did not know.

As we attempted to get closer and intervene in some way, the Jewish settler children, women and men grouped in closely to push us away.

They pushed, restrained and threatened me for my simple use of an automatic camera. It became obvious that my photographing was a diversion, pulling the settlers' attention from the altercation at hand and allowing Joshua and Natasha to get closer to the soldiers. This also allowed time to contact official international observers.

After managing to get ourselves away from the settlers, we were able again to keep in close range of the soldiers, now detaining and interrogating the two men. Continuing to photograph the interrogation seemed to stymie some of the residual anger in the soldiers but raised the settlers' level of agitation.

The fast-shooting automatic camera sounds seemed an asset that night. We received no injury outside of absorbing threats and anger.

The fast-shooting automatic camera sounds seemed an asset that night. We received no injury outside of absorbing threats and anger.

I think back to my conversation with the elder and that dark, hollow sadness I could see in her heavy eyes. From a humble home in the Canadian bush country she can sense the weight of a world in turmoil. She has experienced it: the domination, oppression and sadness of a people removed from their freedom, their peace.

The night of anger and violence was a sight I'd seen before but in a different world, with a different people. For me it was a learning experience like no other.

Violence is not an uncommon sight in my Mennonite Voluntary Service assignment in Riverton, Man. Neither is oppression. One might ask, Where is God during all of this? I believe that Natasha is correct in saying that God was working within us while at the same time working within the violent, angry settlers assaulting us, within the angry soldiers stripping the human rights from a man, and within the men on the ground, in the dirt.

God our Creator has woven an intricate, difficult puzzle. As we open our mind and heart we may begin to see when pieces fall into place or when pieces fall by the wayside, waiting to be picked up and dusted off by the faithful ones.

Next time I should put some film in that camera.

Eric Frey works with Mennonite Voluntary Service among First Nations people in Riverton, Man. Last July he was in Hebron, on the West Bank, visiting his brother, Mark Frey, who is a volunteer with Christian Peacemaker Teams.

Christian Peacemaker Teams has maintained a violence reduction presence in Hebron since June 1995 at the invitation of the Hebron Municipality. CPT is an initiative among Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations and Friends meetings who support violence reduction teams around the world. Contact CPT at P.O. Box 6508, Chicago, IL 60680; 312-455-1199, <CPT@igc.org>

Jubilee Spirit
STOP

Ryan Beiler

Christian Peacemaker Teams member Anita Fast leads about 165 marchers to the International Monetary Fund headquarters in Washington on Dec. 29, 1999, to call for the cancellation of international debts of Third World countries. The demonstration was part of the Christian Peacemaker Congress held Dec. 27-30 in Washington, sponsored by CPT and New Call to Peacemaking.

MBM teachers honored for work

Mennonite Board of Missions workers Disa and Tom Rutschman live in Jokkmokk, an isolated region of Sweden. But the entire country is their classroom.

The Rutschmans, instructors at a local junior high school, also teach Spanish throughout Sweden via the Internet. "This means that students sit in front of a computer several hundred kilometers away and, with video camera and microphone, are able to talk to and see each other," Tom Rutschman says.

The project has won the Rutschmans recognition from the European Union for one of Sweden's top five "innovative pedagogical projects" in 1999.

Both Rutschmans teach English and Spanish. Disa is also a special education teacher, and Tom also teaches French.
—*MBM News Service*

Spirit of Jubilee proclaimed in capital

Washington vigils, conference emphasize peace work

WASHINGTON—Highlighting a weeklong vigil for Jubilee 2000 debt cancellation, a group of activists organized by Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) entered the Washington headquarters of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Dec. 29, 1999, to protest international debt crushing Third World countries.

Following a service of prayer and song, about 165 participants attempting to pass through the main entrance to the IMF building were locked out. They then proceeded to occupy four other entrances until all were locked, effectively stopping all traffic into the building.

As IMF officials told vigil leaders that their entrance to the building would be impossible, CPTer Cliff Kindy reassured them, "We believe in miracles."

Three protesters were arrested for unlawful entry at a delivery entrance (and were released the next day without charges), but 12 participants were granted entrance to the building.

Inside, on a balcony overlooking a vast inner courtyard, they participated a liturgy of deliverance and transformation, asking God to "create in the International Monetary Fund a clean heart" and for the power to "resist evil, injustice and oppression."

The 12 then talked with IMF officials for more than an hour, sharing the biblical vision of Jubilee and their need to speak for people from countries that must divert funds from basic needs such as education, health care and nutrition to service unpayable debts.

Representatives of the IMF, which sets conditions for international loan approval and payment, acknowledged the seriousness of the debt crisis and offered assurances that the institution is reforming to better represent the needs of the poor but said the process is slow.

Daily vigils continued throughout the week with the sounding of trumpets to proclaim Jubilee at the moment of the new year, followed by a concluding feast of rice and beans at noon on Jan. 1.

"It was a nice beginning and very symbolically significant," Kindy says.

The IMF demonstrations were held in conjunction with the fifth Christian Peacemaker Congress, Dec. 27-30, 1999, in Washington and sponsored by CPT and New Call to Peacemaking, projects of North American Mennonites, Brethren and Friends. The congress drew about 150 people. Workshops tackled issues such as urban peacemaking, war tax resistance, the underside of American history, hate groups, media literacy, peace evangelism and the work of CPT.

The keynote speaker was Kathy Kelly, national coordinator of Voices in the Wilderness, which is working to end sanctions against Iraq. Kelly called for a new commitment to "simplicity, sharing and service" and the need to examine relationships with a suffering world as citizens of a "rogue superpower."

"We are not afraid because ours is a resurrection faith," she said. "You cannot kill the mandate to love our enemies, to love our neighbors."—*Ryan Beiler*

After 30 years, Native Ministries workers still enlarging God's circle of fellowship

RIVERTON, Man.—When Edith and Neill von Gunten moved to Riverton in 1976, they said they would not start another church. As workers with Native Ministries of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC, now Mennonite Church Canada), the von Guntens had plenty to do in other communities around northern Manitoba's Lake Winnipeg.

"Fifty-one out of 52 weekends a year, we were up north," Edith recalls.

The reason the Berne, Ind., natives settled in Riverton, a town of 600, was that it had a high school for their four children.

But the von Guntens learned to never say never. In 1980, they went back to Indiana for a year, where Neill was a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart and Edith studied at Goshen College.

"Most of the people [in Manitoba] didn't believe we were coming back," Edith says, "and when we did, there was a whole new energy for church activities and Sunday school."

The von Guntens resisted the idea. But by the late 1980s, they gave in and sat down with a group of people from Riverton to talk about what they were looking for in a church. Most of the group was Native or Metis (racially mixed ancestry), people who did not feel comfortable or welcome at some of the more traditional churches in town.

"In most of them, I feel like an outsider," says Emily Collins, who grew up in a Metis community. "It was a dream come true to have a church of our own in Riverton."

Called Riverton Fellowship Circle, the congregation draws upon many Native elements for worship. "We always meet in a circle," Neill says. "That shows that everyone is equal—God made us all equal, no one any better than anyone else. A circle has no beginning and no end. And our circle is open at one end, so it can always expand."

The worship service incorporates aspects that would be familiar to most Mennonites, such as sharing, prayer, Scripture reading and singing . Less familiar would be the presence of a candle in the center of the circle to symbolize the light and warmth of Christ, plus the central place of fire in Native life, or the six-directional prayer—up, down, north, south, east and west—based on Ojibway tradition.

The Fellowship Circle has a core group of 15 to 20. Attendance at Sunday evening worship services can range from twice that to only one or two besides the von Guntens. The group's meeting place, built with contributions from across North America, was dedicated in 1997.

"Our parish is 600 to 700 people in a 100-mile radius who we relate to and who relate to us," Neill says. "At our Christmas banquet, we have 80-90 who come and feel they're part of the Fellowship Circle."

The von Guntens were introduced to Native Ministries work more than 30 years ago. As a young married couple, they served with Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) in Chicago from 1965 to 1967. While there, Neill says, "we felt that God was calling us in the direction of working with minority peoples."

When their MVS term was done, they moved to Winnipeg, where Neill studied at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and Edith worked as a secretary in the CMC offices. They spent the next two summers on a Native reserve on the shores of Lake Winnipeg. In 1969, they became full-time workers with CMC's Native Ministries in Manigotagan, Man., holding church services and working in community development. Neill even was Manigotagan's first mayor, serving from 1971 to 1973. After a year of further study at CMBC, the von Guntens moved to Riverton.

"When I was a boy growing up in Berne, missionaries were always coming to speak at First Mennonite Church," Neill says. "They would tell glowing stories about the mission field, and as a 14- or 15-year-old I would think, 'That's not the whole story; they're not telling everything.' There are wonderful things that happened, but there are a lot of hurts and struggles.

"It's incredible what people in our group have been through. Almost every single one has a heartbreaking story. There's alcoholism, poverty, physical and sexual abuse. God has helped them to overcome a lot to walk the road of life. Struggling together is the key. We wouldn't want to be doing anything else—this is where God wants us to be."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Neill von Gunten shows a piece of pottery he made to his wife, Edith (center), and daughter, Kathi von Gunten Wiebe. Riverton (Man.) Fellowship Circle, which the von Guntens' helped organize, has a small pottery studio, which is overseen by a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker.

MVS worker shapes lives with art classes

Eric Frey is an artist, fashioning works from raw materials. But in Riverton, Man., his biggest creation may be turning a storage shed into a pottery studio and providing much-needed activities for local people.

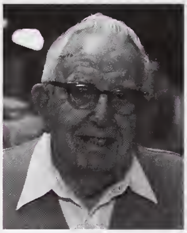
Frey, a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker from Newton, Kan., leads pottery classes in the studio, located on Riverton Fellowship Circle's property. The building includes two pottery wheels and a kiln.

Most of the funding for the equipment and supplies has come from an endowment fund at First Mennonite Church in Berne, Ind., Neill and Edith von Gunten's home congregation. The von Guntens are Fellowship Circle leaders and longtime workers with Mennonite Church Canada's Native Ministries.

"The kids with fetal alcohol syndrome have been the most interesting to work with," Frey says. "They become different people when they are creating something."—*Melanie Zuercher*

Pennsylvania man lives up to his name

Volunteer has generated $250,000 in handicraft sales



Sell

AKRON, Pa.—If your last name was Sell, becoming a salesperson might be a logical pursuit. That has been the case for 87-year-old Menno Sell.

After a career of church-planting, Sell and his wife, Clara, retired to Lancaster County, Pa., in 1976 and began looking for a place to volunteer. They started working at the Selfhelp Crafts (now Ten Thousand Villages) store in Ephrata, Pa. In 1980, program director Paul Leatherman, now Ten Thousand Villages director of marketing, teased Sell, saying he should live up to his name by selling the handicrafts outside the store.

The Sells jumped at the idea and began marketing the crafts from a 27-foot section of shelves at Roots Country Market in Manheim, Pa. Every Tuesday found them at their crowded booth, marketing the handicrafts and telling people about the program. Now nearly 20 years later, the Sells' booth sales have passed the $250,000 mark.

"I do this as a part of my faith," Sell says. "The principles this organization follows are very important, and I am glad I can be a part of God's work around the world."

Two years after beginning their endeavor in Manheim, the Sells went on an organization-sponsored learning tour to India and Bangladesh as a way to celebrate 50 years of marriage.

"That trip changed us," Sell says. "We saw how people in other parts of the world were living. We came back ready to tell others about our experience and how the crafts we were selling made a difference."

Besides talking with customers, the Sells spoke about their experiences in more than 100 churches from Pennsylvania to Florida.

The past 20 years have been filled with good times and bad, years of high sales and low. Sell says one hard thing has been seeing sales fall at their market booth as the Ephrata Ten Thousand Villages store became larger. But, he says, "we kept at it and still felt we were helping in an important way."

Clara died in 1998. But Sell keeps coming to the Ten Thousand Villages warehouse in Akron each week, picking the products he knows will interest buyers on the following Tuesday.

"We thank God for people like Menno," says Ten Thousand Villages director Paul Myers. "He shows us how to put our faith into action and that one person can make a difference in the lives of people around the world."
—Larry Guengerich for MCC News Service

...but the kitchen sink

A flood victim in central Vietnam receives pots and pans and a blanket, purchased with Mennonite Central Committee funds. MCC provided $20,000 after late October and early November 1999 rains caused severe flooding. More rain fell last month, temporarily stranding Vietnamese Mennonites from Ho Chi Minh City. They had traveled to central Vietnam to assist flood victims by distributing rice and blankets provided by MCC and Eastern Mennonite Missions.

World Concern photo for MCC News Service

St. Louis named CHM City on a Hill

NEWTON, Kan.—The Gateway to the West has now become a City on a Hill.

The Commission on Home Ministries has named St. Louis its City on a Hill for 2000. The program awards $25,000 annually for urban ministry in a U.S. or Canadian city.

The St. Louis application included plans for conflict resolution training, Ten Thousand Villages store outlets, an interracial congregation in the north part of the metropolitan area, and new partnerships with rural congregations in Illinois, Kansas and Missouri.

Current Mennonite presence in the city includes St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Redeemer of the World Evangelical (Ethiopian) Church, St. Louis Mennonite Voluntary Service unit, St. Louis Peace Center and a Ten Thousand Villages store.

Last year's City on a Hill was Montreal.
—GCMC News Service

Northern Ireland government agreement brings hope and challenges for peace work

ARCHBOLD, Ohio—After 30 years of cold sectarian violence, Northern Ireland is thawing, says Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) program director in Ireland. And that means new opportunities for peace work.

The recent breakthrough agreement to bring lifelong enemies into one power-sharing government presents Northern Ireland with the possibility of a radical shift in society, Joe Campbell told a Dec. 16, 1999, banquet at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

The progress toward peace in the past year, Campbell said, has been greater than the previous 29 years together. "It's like going from the depths of winter to glorious summer in one day," he said.

Campbell has dedicated the past three decades to reconciliation and peacemaking in his native Northern Ireland.

"It seems like a crazy question: 'Do you want to be rid of this violence?' " he said. "But if that means a radical change—not just in another person, but in me as well—it's difficult for people to come to terms with that change."

For police officers, the agreement could mean an end to the violence but also to their jobs. For paramilitaries, peace "means handing in their guns and earning a living doing ordinary things," Campbell said.

For other people, the peace agreement is hard to accept because it calls for the release from prison of paramilitaries who murdered family members, Campbell said.

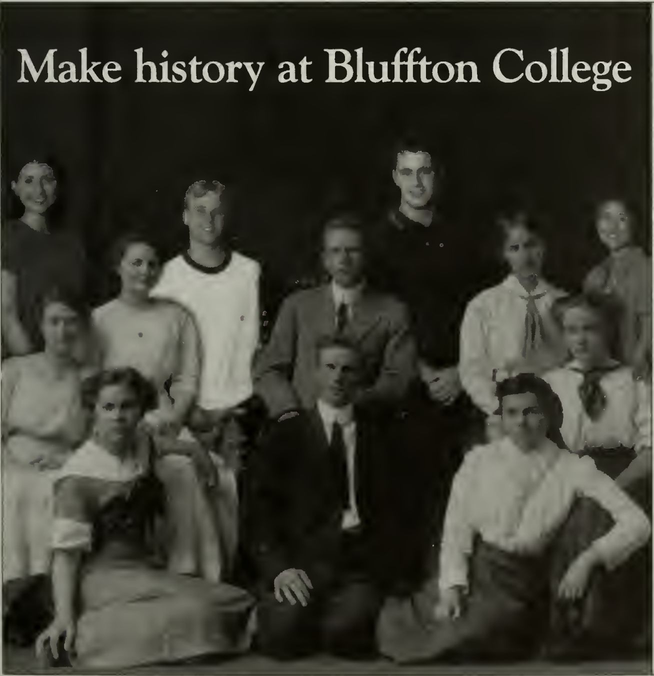
"Can you sense the disillusionment that change brings?" he asked. "No memorials, no agreement can restore that which was stolen."

But, Campbell said, "that is God's challenge to people in Northern Ireland, to love our enemies."

"You see, moving a society from generations of violence and mistrust to a shared government of peace is a long-term commitment," he said. "That is why the work of MBM in Ireland is so important. Because it is long-term."

"We need to be a people of hope," said Campbell's wife, Janet. "The hurts that have gone on for 30 years have taken a hold on people. We must help heal them from not only their physical hurt. It is a healing of memory that they need."—*Grant E. Rissler of MBM News Service*

Joe Campbell



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MEDA program still reaching for success

DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania—Peace and quiet is difficult to find in Dar es Salaam's Kariakoo Market. Vendors work 14 hours a day, seven days a week. The place throbs with people trying to eke out an existence.

Many of them are from elsewhere in Tanzania. They come to the city looking for a better life. Few find it. That is all the more reason why struggling business owners need help, like a chance to obtain credit at rates they can afford.

Mennonite Economic Development Associates offers credit and basic business training through two microenterprise agencies: one in coastal Dar es Salaam and another in the Mbeya region, several hours inland. Both programs help small entrepreneurs improve their microbusinesses, but both have not yet achieved the sustainability targets set by MEDA.

But the goal is coming closer. During several months last year, Dar Credit Facility has managed to cover all its costs; in other months they have come within a few hundred dollars, says country manager Trudi Schwartz. Mbeya has 1,061 clients; Dar has about a third of that.

"Don't give bigger loans because you feel sorry for them," Schwartz tells her staff in Dar es Salaam. "You're not doing them a favor if you tie them down with payments they can't handle."

A key performance indicator is on-time repayment: how many loans are overdue and by how long. MEDA aims for 10 percent or less. In Tanzania, the figure is more like 15 percent to 20 percent.

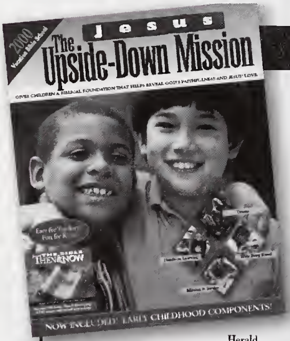
"If each of you brought your two largest outstanding loans current, we'd bring down our overdue rate to 15 percent," Mbeya project manager Conrad Martin tells his staff.

Neither program lacks for interested applicants. The possibility of affordable credit catches the attention of small vendors and producers who show up at the weekly introductory information sessions. There trainers explain the basics of the program and lay out the criteria. Those participants who think they can meet the requirements can then apply.

Once approved, clients take a short training course where they learn how to use credit as well as some fundamentals of bookkeeping, management and marketing. The training period also gives credit officers a chance to get to know their new clients. As a matter of policy, credit officers visit clients at home and at work to better understand their businesses and circumstances. Once the relationship is established, clients who get in the habit of paying promptly will be visited monthly. Others will see their credit officer weekly or more often.

Key to any long-term success in Tanzania is Huduma ya Maendeleo (Swahili for "service for development"), a company MEDA formed to take over the loan programs in a few years. Huduma's board has some blue chip Mennonite members, such as a senior banking executive and a highly placed diplomat. But they are busy people. Much will depend on the extent to which they and others can be ignited with a vision for an indigenous credit facility.

"You constantly face difficult choices: when to advance more money, when to get tough, when to pull the plug," says Neil Janzen, former MEDA president and now Tanzania project director. "This is all part of helping the poor."—*Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service*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St. Louis pastor named EMU academic provost

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Rick Maclin, a St. Louis pastor and college administrator, has been appointed academic provost at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, effective July 1. In the newly created, cabinet-level position, Maclin will serve as the school's chief academic officer.

He has been associate academic dean at Fontbonne College since 1996. Prior to that, Maclin was off-site coordinator for an adult degree-completion program for the University of Illinois at Springfield and chaired the business department at Missouri Baptist College in St. Louis for nine years. He has also served as senior pastor of Bethesda Mennonite Church in St. Louis for the past 12 years and was a worship leader at the St. Louis 99 adult sessions.

Maclin has a bachelor's degree from Sangamon State University, Springfield, Ill.; a master's degree in educational administration from Bradley University, Peoria, Ill.; and a doctorate in higher education administration from St. Louis University. He has also done continuing education in the management development program at Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Mass.

MDS work continues in wake of Hurricane Floyd

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteers are finishing cleanup work and beginning rebuilding and repairing damage left last fall by flooding caused by Hurricane Floyd.

MDS is working at three sites: Courtland, Va.; Snow Hill, N.C.; and Burgaw, N.C. MDS is committed to long-term work until most recovery efforts are complete. The North Carolina projects could last for at least a year.

"We were slow in establishing our projects in North Carolina because we wanted to see where the greatest need would be," says MDS executive coordinator Tom Smucker. "We also wanted to go to areas where most national organizations weren't, and we definitely found them."

Around Burgaw, for example, city sewers and farm manure lagoons spilled into the rivers, causing a toxic and dangerous environment.—*MDS News Service*

MEDA Bolivia program gets USAID assistance

WINNIPEG—A rural business development program in Bolivia operated by Mennonite Economic Development Associates has received a boost from the U.S. Agency for International Development. MEDA and USAID have signed a two-year agreement for $404,000 to allow MEDA to expand its work in the poverty-stricken highlands of Bolivia. The money will also support the production and marketing of new crops in the region, such as lima beans and chilies.

For the project, MEDA will collaborate with ASOMEX, a local marketing company that grew out of MEDA's bean production and marketing program. Two new partners will also join the project.—*MEDA News Service*

Bethel College nursing program reaccredited

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College's nursing program has again received professional accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. CCNE is an arm of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the national agency for the accreditation of baccalaureate and graduate nursing education programs. Bethel has held CCNE accreditation since 1982. During that time, the North Newton, Kan., school has had 426 nursing graduates.

Bluffton College offering new master's degree

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Classes began this month for Bluffton College's new master's degree program in organizational management. The program in November 1999 received approval from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Students in the two-year program will meet for class one night a week, with summers off.

by the way ...

In 1763, Lancaster County (Pa.) Mennonite Christian Hershey saved the only survivors of a white attack on a Conestoga Indian settlement by hiding them in his cellar for the winter.—*Land, Piety, Peoplehood* by Richard K. MacMaster

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Events

Fifth Mennonite Arts Weekend, Feb. 4-6, Cincinnati. Contact: schess@cinci.infi.net or 513-351-8785.

Mennonite Disaster Service Region II annual meeting, March 4, Bowne, Mich.

Allegheny Conference spring sessions, March 5, Scottdale, Pa.

Puerto Rico Conference annual meeting, March 9-12, Aibonito, Puerto Rico.

EDITOR

theMennonite

The Mennonite seeks to serve the integrating Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world.

Full-time editor needed for this weekly magazine, to begin work no later than July 2000.

The editor has these responsibilities:

- planning and coordinating production of the magazine
- building and nurturing constituency relationships
- being the primary editorial writer
- overseeing the work of other staff members in dispersed locations in editing, design, subscriber services, web presence, advertising sales and marketing

The successful candidate will have these characteristics:

- a strong Christian faith
- familiarity with the traditions that are forming Mennonite Church USA
- active involvement in the Mennonite faith community
- leadership gifts and management experience
- significant publications/journalism experience

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Scottdale, Pa. *Newton, Kan.*

Workers

Atwood, Tim, on Nov. 14, 1999, concluded a pastorate at Fairhaven Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Bergen, Heinrich, Neuwied, Germany, is beginning a one-year assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) as a carpenter in Americus, Ga.

Brenneman, Maury, on Nov. 14, 1999, concluded a pastorate at Providence Mennonite Church, Montgomery, Ind.

Christophel Lichti, Jennifer and Nathan, Goshen, Ind., are beginning one-year assignments with MVS in Tucson, Ariz., she as a social worker and he as an environmental educator.

Dillon, Jennifer, Washington, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as the Washington unit local program coordinator.

Duerksen, Grace, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a violence education coordinator in St. Paul, Minn.

Hartzler, Shem, Hesston, Kan., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a peace worker in St. Louis.

Hebblethwaite, Paul and Sarah, West Lafayette, Ind., are beginning two-year assignments with MVS in Fresno, Calif., he as a volunteer coordinator and she as a mediator and case manager.

Herr, Holly, Harrisonburg, Va., is beginning a one-year term with MVS as a social worker and legal aid worker in San Antonio, Texas.

Johnson, Jeremy, Kansas City, Kan., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a computer consultant in Washington.

Kauffman, Minda, Baxter, Ky., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a volunteer coordinator in Washington.

Koop, Lisa, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a paralegal in Harlingen, Texas.

Landis, Abigail, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a case manager in Tucson, Ariz.

Martin, Corina, Ephrata, Pa., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a visual arts instructor in Fresno, Calif.

Mellinger, Celia, Harrisonburg, Va., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a community outreach worker in Edmonton.

Miller, Jason, Middlebury, Ind., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a maintenance worker and computer consultant in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Nussbaum, Katrina, Orrville, Ohio, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a young adult learning coordinator in Chicago.

Reichenbach, Brian B., Freeport, Mich., is beginning an 11-month assignment with MVS as a mental health care assistant in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Reichenbach, Heather Bachman, Goshen, Ind., is beginning an 11-month assignment with MVS with a teen program in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Schaberl, Karin, Linz, Germany, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a childcare worker in Kansas City, Kan.

Schmidt, Mark, Neuwied, Germany, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a teacher's assistant in St. Louis.

Shank, Rebecca, Dayton, Va., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a teacher at Chicago Mennonite Learning Center.

Siemens, Andrea, Virgil, Ont., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS as a paralegal in Washington.

Swartzendruber, Tara, Goshen, Ind., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a community case manager in Seattle.

Voth, Rudolf, Augustdorf, Germany, is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS as a construction worker in Americus, Ga.

Births

Benner, Chase Bradley, Dec. 13, to Dean and Jennifer Benner, Landisville, Pa.

Fast, Peyton Reily, Dec. 20, to Brian and Kendra (Friesen) Fast, Moundridge, Kan.

Good-Elliott, Benjamin Joseph, Nov. 26, to Carol and Phil Good-Elliott, Midland, Mich.

Hunsberger, Jaden Duane, Dec. 20, to Jennifer (Godshall) and Keith Hunsberger, Lederach, Pa.
Nisly, Jaleah Lynae, Dec. 16, to Keith and Lynette (Mellinger) Nisly, Lancaster, Pa.
Ranck, Joanne Elaine and Joel Daniel (twins), Dec. 17, to Carl and Mary Beth (Eby) Ranck, Lancaster, Pa.
Ricer, Brian Edward, Nov. 13, to Ed and Jolene (Bixler) Ricer, Orrville, Ohio.
Shull, Tyler Isaac, Dec. 9, to Kristina (Kunkle) and Randall Shull, Timberville, Va.
Weaver, Madeline Louise, Dec. 13, to Ken and Marlene Weaver, Lancaster, Pa.
Zila, Samuel Lewis, Nov. 24, to Anthony and Valorie (Hamilton) Zila, Savona, N.Y.

Marriages

Hornberger/Wenger: Kristin Hornberger, Lancaster, Pa., and Eric Wenger, Manheim, Pa., Dec. 19.
Immel/Rheinheimer: Ryan Immel, Kidron, Ohio, and Katie Rheinheimer, Dalton, Ohio, Dec. 18 at Orrville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.
Metzler/Zimmerman: Cheryl Metzler, Lititz, Pa., and Donovan Zimmerman, Manheim, Pa., Dec. 18.

Deaths

Bradley, Howard, 77, Fort Wayne, Ind., died Dec. 3. Spouse: Helen Bradley. Parent: Charles Bradley (deceased). Other survivors: children Forrest, Mark; three grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 6 at Payne, Ohio.
Clemmer, Ruth Elizabeth Detwiler, 65, Telford, Pa., died Dec. 23. Spouse: Norman Clemmer. Parents: Irvin and Elizabeth Detwiler. Other survivors: children Patricia, Julia Wimmer, Norman, Robert, Timothy; 11 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 26 at Souderton, Pa.
Kornhaus, Ruth Byler Yutzy Begly, 84, Kidron, Ohio, died Nov. 28. Spouse: (1st) Andrew Yutzy (deceased); (2nd) Nathan Begly (deceased); (3rd) Forest Kornhaus. Parents: Alvin and Nettie Seigley Byler (deceased). Other survivors: children Andrew Yutzy, Donald Yutzy; stepchildren Doris Begly, Marilyn Stauffer, Maynard Begly, Loren Begly, Vernice Begly, Eldon Korhnaus; four grandchildren; 26 stepgrandchildren; six great-grandchildren; 40 stepgreat-grandchildren; one stepgreat-great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 1 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.
Miller, Blanche Miller, 92, Louisville, Ohio, died Dec. 16. Spouse: Forrest Miller (deceased). Parents: John and Lydia Schmucker Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Marilyn Schneider, Lowell; five grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 18 at Stoner Heights Mennonite Church, Louisville.
Nafziger, Arthur, 91, Hopedale, Ill., died Dec. 20. Spouse: Verna Sutter Nafziger. Parents: Andrew and Katherine Nafziger (deceased). Other survivors: children Pat Murphy, Faye Coultas, Paul, Joel; 15 grandchidren; 47 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 23 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.
Schibley, Jimmetta, 71, Fort Wayne, Ind., died Dec. 6. Spouse: Olen Schibley (deceased). Survivors: children Lynn Nuttle, Lamarr, Omar; 11 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 9 at Fort Wayne.
Schrock, Violet, 77, Nappanee, Ind., died Dec. 1. Spouse: Edward Schrock. Parents: Earl and Barbara Aarter (deceased). Other survivors: children Merlyn, Garry, Jan, Donna Bailey; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 4 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind.
Skiles, Leona, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 7. Spouse: Joe Skiles. Other survivors: children Linda Hartzell, Karen Dubow, Grace Laydon, Joan Fleck, Molly Jo Seeck; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 11 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind.
Smucker, Francis Yoder, 83, Harrisonburg, Va., died Dec. 16. Spouse: Dan Smucker. Other survivors: children Gary, Jean Smucker Fisher, Karen Shelly; three grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 19 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Wedel, Lillie, 99, Moundridge, Kan., died Dec. 9. Spouse: Jacob Wedel (deceased). Parents: Peter and Katharina Schrag Wedel (deceased). Survivors: son Ronald; three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 11 at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge.
Wyse, Mary Detwiler, 75, Fairview, Mich., died Dec. 16 of cancer. Spouse: Lawrence (deceased). Parents: Oren and Nettie Detweiler (deceased). Survivors: children Dwight, Louise Morrison, Pat Falb, Dexter, Dennis, Duane, Judy Kauffman, Donavon; 30 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 20 at Fairview Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

Both classified and display advertising space in *The Mennonite* are available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has an opening for a ***couple*** for a long-term voluntary service assignment. For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **Rosslyn Academy**, K-12 fully accredited school in ***Nairobi, Kenya***, is searching for qualified, dedicated staff for the 2000-2001 school year. Positions open: kindergarten, 5th, middle-school English, middle-school science, technology, computer, librarian, PE.

  Contact Dena Brent, Box 14146, Nairobi, Kenya; email rosslyn@maf.org

- **Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute** invites applications for the position of ***principal*** to begin July 2000. MBCI has a student body of 560 (grade 7 to senior IV) and a professional staff of 40 teachers.

  Address inquiries and applications by Feb. 29 to Search Committee, 180 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E8; 204-667-8210; fax 204-661-5091; email mbcis@mbnet.mb.ca

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, Reinholds, Pa., seeks a full-time ***youth/associate pastor***. Youth work and preaching experience a plus; should have general agreement with Anabaptist teachings and a strong evangelically-based faith commitment.

  Inquiries/resumes to Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 341, Reinholds, PA 17569; 717-336-6130; email emmanuelmc@desupernet.net

- **Established insurance** and financial services company in process of filing application for trust charter seeks the following trust professionals:

  Trust company CEO: Must have prior experience as a senior trust officer and demonstrated abilities to manage staff.

  Trust officer: Must have prior trust experience. Marketing and sales experience a plus.

  Both positions require living in northern Indiana. Please fax resume and salary requirements to Mennonite Mutual Aid, attn. Cyndee Blue, 219-533-5264.

- ***Second Mile*** peace curriculum is seeking a ***graphic designer*** to work on a contract basis. Responsibilities include design and layout for all components. Bulk of work will be in fall 2000, some in summer 2001. Applicants are to submit a portfolio. Short-listed applicants will be asked to provide sample design. Apply by Feb. 15, 2000.

  For more information, contact Doug Krehbiel, 316-283-5100; email dougk@gcmc.org. Second Mile materials will help congregations proclaim and be signs of Christ's peace in a broken world.

- **Employment opportunity: *Conference minister*** to serve South Central Conference beginning about June 1, 2000, with office in North Newton, Kan. Duties include oversight for congregations and pastors in Kansas, Oklahoma, south Texas, Arkansas and Missouri. Qualifications include strong relational skills, successful pastoral experience, and a heart for mission and outreach. Some administrative interest and/or experience desirable. Salary consistent with denominational guidelines.

  Contact Howard Hershberger, 634 S. Main, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-3171; email hohmlh@southwind.net

- ***The Mennonite's* Prisoner Fund** is running on empty and needs your help. You can provide subscriptions to *The Mennonite* for people in prison who do not have the resources to subscribe on their own. Send your contributions today to The Mennonite, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

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Share stories of God's work in your life

by Jane Stoltzfus Buller

Evangelism is being studied and explored in the Mennonite church, yet some of us have reservations about how evangelism has been shaped over the century. We find ourselves mute, unsure how to do this important thing Jesus told us to do. We have only a little voice for sharing the good news, yet a big desire to be faithful. Perhaps we can be guided by our stories.

First of all, we need to know our story. What have we experienced of the good news of Jesus Christ? How are we aware of how God is transforming us? How are we allowing God's transforming grace to work within us?

It is our story that will be our starting place in testifying to God's grace. Revival meetings of the past often included a story from a new Christian. Usually the stories were stories of radical change, from the darkness of a life immersed in evil to a life lived in the light of the goodness of God. They were powerful stories. Convicting stories.

Perhaps we who are ordinary people, who have not traversed the corridors of sex, drugs and violence, do not think our stories have the potential for convicting others. Yet many people we meet will be just like us. They, too, do not sin dramatically. They just sin, as we do. How is God transforming us? Wouldn't our testimonies be a good starting place for telling the good news?

The second point is that we have to walk with God, speaking and responding to God's voice. We have to pray out of our dependence upon God's Spirit and direction. We have to understand that God is our light and life.

We cannot do this alone. This choice to acknowledge our dependence is contradictory to the cultural and social ethos of our world today. We are in an age of self-help.

We can find books and articles, self-help groups and directions for improving everything in our lives: sex, weight, effectiveness, looks or assertiveness. But many people are left with bodies that are thin but lives that are hell. Through many media—TV, video, film, our laws, music—we are inundated with the push to control our lives. Make money, get the best, do it all. Yet many people are doing it all and finding emptiness, a dissatisfaction with life.

Our story of good news happens when we are able to see God working through and in the many details of our lives. Potential stories of the kingdom of God here on earth include our healing, whether emotional or physical, plus character improvements within ourselves that are directly related to the Spirit's work within us, guidance in who we marry, our jobs, our friendships and where we serve. With grateful hearts, with faith grown through our experience with God, we speak about a living Savior and Lord with an authenticity the Holy Spirit can use to convict and invite others.

Third, we must be sensitive for the time and the place to speak. In the Gospels we see that Jesus gave different directions for different situations. Of the many people Jesus healed and changed, some were instructed to be quiet and some instructed to tell. We must pray to be guided by the Spirit, and we must allow the situation to instruct us what we are to do. We depend on the Spirit to help us speak and hear. Jesus' words "the one who has ears, let that one hear" and his many references to seeing and understanding remind us that not only do the stories and words presented make a difference but also the openness of the person hearing.

Our story of good news happens when we are able to see God working through and in the many details of our lives.

Finally, we need to tell our stories pointing to God. Sharing about our transformation, about how we are doing well, does nothing for others unless we give the glory to God.

If we humbly recognize that God cares for us and works with the details of our lives, our stories are God's stories. If we sense that it is God who brings us through difficulties and makes us better for them, it is God we will praise. If we feel and know that God never leaves us but always holds us in every situation, good or bad, we handle life as victorious people, but it is God's victory. If we rest in the assurance that God loves us as no one else can, it is our pleasure to spread the good news of God's love to others.

Our stories are our beginning point of evangelism. Without them we might have nothing to say.

Jane Stoltzfus Buller is pastor at Walnut Hill Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

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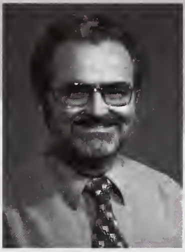

J. Lorne Peachey

The ever-whirling wheel of change

Regardless of when you decide to go into a new millennium—this year or next—you can be sure it will have one thing in common with the ones before: change. As early as 480 B.C. the Greek philosopher Heraclitus observed, "Nothing endures but change." In 1590 Edmund Spenser wrote about "the ever-whirling wheel of change, the which all mortal things doth sway."

One mortal thing that's swaying is this publication. Even in the first year of a new decade, *The Mennonite* faces change. A major one will be a new editor to manage these pages.

After almost 10 years of editing a denominational magazine—first *Gospel Herald* and now *The Mennonite*—I have decided to turn over editorial duties to another generation. This coming summer I will also observe my 30th anniversary of work as a church journalist, work I have enjoyed tremendously and will miss immensely. But I believe the integrating Mennonite Church USA needs a new editorial voice. The change is slated for this August.

Other changes are not waiting as long. This issue is the last for our design consultant, Judith Rempel Smucker, who not only helped set up this magazine but also continued to hold us to our graphic standards for 92 issues. We will miss her expertise and her chuckle. Judith, a freelance designer from Akron, Pa., asked to be relieved of her duties to give more time to other work.

Our new design consultant is Merrill Miller, Scottdale, Pa. With Mennonite Publishing House for 10 years, Merrill designed the Jubilee curriculum series, is currently working on new vacation Bible school materials and also does church bulletins and books for Herald Press. He will work for *The Mennonite* as a freelancer.

With changes in personnel, the staff is also asking questions about content, structure and design. When this magazine began with the merger of two existing publications in February 1998, we attempted to keep the best of both *Gospel Herald* and *The Mennonite* even as we developed a new periodical. But now, as the church approaches actual merger, we are asking what changes we need to make to do our job better.

A major question is whether to continue as a weekly or go to some other frequency, likely every other week. Does the church need the immediacy that a weekly gives to news and information? Or is it better served with more exploration and analysis? The latter could be done better with current staffing and budget if we published less frequently.

Your feedback is welcome. Email me your preference: <theMennonite@mph.org>. Or write: 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683. Responses will be combined with other research on this and other questions.

Regardless of what ever-whirling changes the future brings us, the mission of *The Mennonite* will continue to be (a) to inspire, encourage and offer spiritual help; (b) to provide information and analysis of what's happening in the merging Mennonite Church USA; (c) to highlight connections with the broader Mennonite and Christian world.

"Let the great world spin forever down the ringing grooves of change," Alfred, Lord Tennyson wrote in 1842. *The Mennonite* staff may not be quite that enthusiastic about change. But we do welcome it, not because change is inevitable, but because we believe it will help us to do a better job as a communication channel for Mennonite Church USA in the days ahead.—*jlp*

Saving the world's trees one issue at a time

Since its beginning, this publication has had an uneasy relationship with the paper it's printed on. We chose it because we wanted an economical stock that reproduced photos well. Many subscribers, however, found it difficult to read because of the glare.

Finally we have an alternative. This new paper has been on the market for only six months; we began using it with our December 1999 issues. It's an uncoated stock with much less glare but which still gives good reproduction of photos and other illustrations.

The best news is what this paper does for trees. A full 50 percent is recycled fibers, mill ends and other scraps that would otherwise go to the garbage dump. Of this amount, 20 percent is post-consumer waste, i.e., previously used paper that has been de-inked.

We can do all this and still save $15,000-$20,000 a year on our paper costs.

What a wonderful way to begin a new year, new century, new millennium: saving trees while cutting costs. That's change we can live with.—*jlp*

the Mennonite
January 18, 2000

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Innovative mutual aid needed

The questions raised by Frank and Elizabeth Soto Albrecht (Readers Say, Nov. 9, 1999) are troubling. While suggesting that Anabaptist retirement communities are doing a good job nurturing faith and delivering care, the Albrechts point to a dilemma faced by families, our congregations and our church-related health-care providers: Who will provide this care for those among us who have need but limited resources?

Our church-related retirement communities, nursing homes and mental health centers provide thousands of dollars of uncompensated care and services. Government and private insurance cover only a portion of the cost of providing quality care. Most of our Mennonite health-care organizations do not have large streams of charitable or benevolent support. Few congregations or conferences provide offering-plate support to these ministries. Some form of sharing is necessary if organizations are to provide care for everyone. How can this load be shared?

The staff and boards of Mennonite health-care providers struggle with this dilemma every day. Perhaps as stronger bridges are built between the church and our health-care ministries, we can find some innovative ways to practice mutual aid on behalf of those in need.—*Rick Stiffney, president, Mennonite Health Services, Goshen, Ind.*

Attractive, not loathsome

Gordon Houser's editorial ("The Muck and the Mire," Dec. 21, 1999) has seriously demeaned the birth of Jesus. The physician Luke, in his opening remarks (Luke 1:1-4), identified his Gospel as a document of careful research. Nowhere in Luke's account, or Matthew's, is given the age of the virgin. Houser's assumption that she was "barely a teen" is without foundation in the Bible.

Further, his proposals that Mary and the baby "could have died" entirely ignore Gabriel's announcement that her pregnancy was by divine decree and that her son was the Son of God (Luke 1:26-38). In addition, Houser obviously never saw a well-kept stable attached to a dwelling.

Everyone, including Houser, seems to delight in downgrading the shepherds as below ordinary citizens. Is there anyone else who knows any better the delicate facts of birthing?

Let it also be remembered that Mary was well prepared for the event, having the swaddling cloths ready. In fact, Isaiah, 700 years before the birth, predicted the virgin will conceive and bear Immanuel. (In Isaiah 7:14, the Hebrew text has the definite article with "virgin," indicating that Mary was chosen from eternity.) Furthermore, the weather in December, if indeed it was December, is not always raw and cold in Bethlehem town. I have been there.

Why not set forth an attractive picture of the most miraculous and spectacular birth of all ages instead of making it loathsome?—*J. Otis Yoder, Breezewood, Pa.*

Dare we ask?

Thanks to Robert and Alice Ruth Ramseyer for stating with laudable brevity and kindess their responses to the call for nominations for the most influential Mennonites of the 20th century (Readers Say, Dec. 28, 1999). This is a concern with which more than a few of us have struggled in recent years as our church institutions and publications have increasingly spotlighted Mennonite good works and the outstanding people who do them. Dare we even ask who are the greatest? And, by the way, who reads Matthew 6:1-6?—*Miriam S. Lind, Goshen, Ind.*

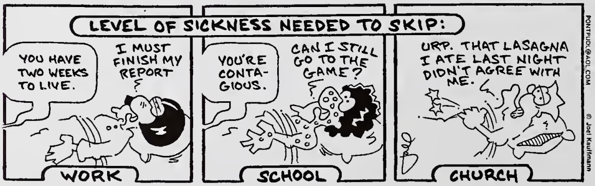
Stories of faith and straying

The review by Ruth Liechty of the Purdue statement on human sexuality (Readers Say, Dec. 21, 1999) forcefully caught the deeper meaning of that statement: covenant, understanding and repentance undergirded with prayer. I especially appreciated her call for dialogue with "our lesbian sisters and gay brothers" by publishing a series of their faith stories. I would like to add to that a request to also publish stories of those who have strayed from or have not come to faith as a result of nonacceptance by the church.—*Vernon Schertz, Atlanta*

Serendipitous juxtaposition

What a serendipitous juxtaposition of two letters in the Dec. 14 Readers Say. The first, by Theron Schlabach, questioned the family anal-

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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y readers say

ogy for church membership, while the second, by Rosemary Blosser Fry quoted Ephesians 2:8,9 ("For by grace ... the gift of God ... not of works"). Contrary to Schlabach, Jesus says that we are born into God's kingdom (John 3:3) and that this birth is not of the flesh nor the will of man (read voluntary association) but of God (John 1:13). The apostle Paul continually referred to church members as brothers and to God the Father. Certainly the family analogy is scriptural and logical.

In Acts 2:47b we read, "And the Lord added to the church." Acceptance into local church membership merely recognizes what God has already done. Let us therefore be careful in attempting to exclude, lest we (by secondary application of Matthew 19:6) put asunder what God hath joined together.—*Robert V. Clausen, Greenville, Ill.*

No question

Should women be leaders or preach in the church? The Word doesn't only tell us that it is not OK, it tells us why. "I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner" (1 Timothy 2:12-14, NRSV).

It isn't a question whether a woman can preach. We all know she can. But Christians must accept the Word. We cannot reject the Word and accept God. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4, KJV). Women leaders or preachers in the church are an open demonstration of rejecting the Word of God. Christians don't feel comfortable and lose interest where the Word is not accepted and God is not honored. Who are we to overrule God?—*Isaac Stoll, Sarasota, Fla.*

Cover illustration
by Merrill Miller

Widening the

Mennonite churches find uses for the Internet.

by Brian R. Hook

The World Wide Web can be used to buy books, make travel arrangements and get the news. Rick Carter used it to find a new congregation.

The Newton, Kan., man earlier this year discovered New Creation Fellowship Church, a General Conference Mennonite Church congregation in Newton.

“I was looking for a church home and was researching Mennonites,” he says. “I found [New Creation’s] web page, visited the church, began attending regularly and joined.”

Churches in the past have used everything from word of mouth to church signs to newspaper ads to listings in the phone book as ways to get the word out about their congregations. Many Mennonite congregations are now adding web sites to that list.

Courtesy photo

Another medium of communication: Rick Carter visited New Creation Fellowship Church, Newton, Kan., after seeing its web page. Now he is a member there.

Rick says God led him to New Creation, so even without the congregation’s web site he believes he would have found the church. But he says the Internet’s potential is enormous for congregations. “The net is just another medium of communication,” Rick says. “I believe there should be a strong presence.”

New Creation put up its web site about a year ago, designed by pastoral staff member Wes Bergen. Steve Schmidt, New Creation’s lead pastor, wrote most of the material on the web site.

“It’s a great way to let people know we are there and what we are about,” says Wes. “If someone wants to find out something about [New Creation] before coming, they can go to the web page and get an idea of what to expect.”

> **The church does not grow by increasing the amount of time people spend isolated in front of machines. For the local congregation, the work of the church is still made flesh only when it is made flesh and not made binary code.**
>
> *—Wes Bergen*

The web site includes New Creation’s mission statement, a short congregational history, messages from the pastors and a description of its preschool program.

Wes says the web site has paid off for the congregation, especially since it is free. Since their Internet service provider (ISP) gives users a certain amount of space for web pages, there is no extra cost involved for the church. Before starting the web site, New Creation already had email access, which only costs the congregation $5 a month.

Outreach ministry: But while web pages are a great way to advertise, Wes warns against using them as a form of outreach ministry. He insists that spreading the good news is done by interpersonal contact.

“The church does not grow by increasing the amount of time people spend isolated in front of machines. The medium is still the message,” Wes says. “For the local congregation, the work of the church is still made flesh only when it is made flesh and not made binary code.”

Martins Creek Mennonite Church in Millersburg, Ohio, went online about four years ago. A congregational member owns a local ISP and provided Martins Creek a free web site. Pastor Carl Wiebe says he does not know how much time has been put into the design and upkeep of the web site.

“The person who has managed it for us has an interest in this area of our congregational life and sees it as part of his ministry,” Carl says.

He says the web site has been useful for college students to send notes to the church and has also been used by web surfers researching Mennonites.

“People from around the world have sent notes of inquiry to the church because of the web site,” Carl says. “I think it could be developed more as a clarifying witness to who our church and our denomination are theologically.”

Martins Creek’s web site now only lists the pastor and location of the church but is being updated, Carl says.

Mennonites are just beginning to learn about the potential of the Internet, says John Harder, administrator of MennoLink, an independent, user-support service. MennoLink provides primarily Mennonite-related email news and discussion groups but also includes links to about 365 congregations. Harder says congregations with web pages can reach a growing number of people, such as Rick

net

Carter, who turn to the Internet for information.

"The amount of information that a congregation can share about itself is limited only by the amount of effort [members] are willing to put into creating a web site," he says.

Unless someone donates space for a web site and volunteers design and/or maintain it, a congregation will incur expenses for its presence on the web, such as monthly ISP fees and costs for someone to design the page. Then there is the time involved in maintaining a site. The more information on a site, the more effort is required to keep it current. Some sites include congregational newsletters, calendars of events, announcements, prayer requests, descriptions of Mennonites and their beliefs, even the previous Sunday's sermon. "That would be a lot of work," Wes says.

Becca Smucker acknowledges that there are barriers for some congregations, particularly financial costs. Becca is content editor for Mennonite.net, a new joint project of Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) and Goshen (Ind.) College to help congregations have an Internet presence.

"Part of the mission of Mennonite.net is to reduce or eliminate those barriers, so that the decision is not whether my church or organization should be online, but what it should be doing there," she says.

Church location and contact information: Mennonite.net has created default sites for all 1,400 Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada congregations. Each site provides basic information, such as church location and contact information. About 25 congregations have modified and expanded their sites to include more information.

"There is now a default page for every North American congregation listed in the [*Mennonite*] *Directory*," Becca says, "and those who wish to update their pages or redesign them at this point can pay a low yearly membership fee to do so."

The membership fee is $50 per year. Mennonite.net can also provide technical and design support.

"The Internet is the most important new communications medium of our time, and the church has an important role to play in it," Becca says. "There really is a lot of potential for good on the Internet, and I hope the Mennonite church can be involved in the Internet as fervently as it is in other venues."

Arnie Bean, a staff member of the Southern California-based Center for Anabaptist Leadership, worked with Houses of Worship, an ecumenical effort to provide congregations with web pages. When encouraging congregations to start web sites, Arnie met with pastors and talked about being on the information superhighway.

"I would explain the importance of being linked to other churches throughout the U.S.," he says. "The tools at their disposal and the information that can be obtained are limitless. [Churches] severely limit themselves if they don't.

"When you stop and [think about] the Great Commission—'Go ye forth and spread the gospel'—what better way is there to spread the gospel than through the Internet? The church cannot let this tool pass them by. I view this as a gift from God."

The Internet is the most important new communications medium of our time, and the church has an important role to play on it.—*Becca Smucker*

John Harder says it's up to each congregation to decide whether or not to start a web page. "I see the Internet as a tool that can be used for many purposes," he says. "Congregations must choose what tools they need to fulfill the mission of their church, and the Internet may not be one of them."

Mark Vincent, stewardship resource director at MMA and director of the Giving Project, looks at congregational web sites as a good way to reach people who might not otherwise be involved in the church, such as the younger generation. "If what a church is putting out there is thought through, it has the potential of getting younger people involved," he says.

Instead of thinking about why churches should start a web page, Mark says, "I think churches should all think long and hard about why they are not going on the Internet."

Brian Hook lives in St. Louis.

A place of healing

A Sunday school class learns about "theotherapy."

by Ginnie Burkholder

Sunday school has become a place of healing at First Mennonite Church in Canton, Ohio. Today, our teacher Bernice, better known as Bernie, asks, "How are you doing?"

> In this class we have come to see that many of our conflicts that cause "dis-ease" are rooted in the unmet needs of our childhood.

I give a forced smile and consider responses. We practice honesty in this class. People are moving into the room where we meet. A friend appears in the doorway to ask if I'm OK. "Is it that evident?" I say as tears well into my eyes and people settle into quietness.

As I struggle with emotions, Bernie answers the friend's inquiry with a now well-used line. "I'm not OK, you're not OK, but that's OK." We all laugh, then Bernie opens with prayer.

What happens next is characteristic of our inner-healing class.

"Do you want to share?" Bernie asks me. I know I need to but am at a loss as to where to begin. "What are you feeling?" she asks me. "Your first answer is usually the best," she prompts as I look inside myself. I cry, giving myself permission not to hold back as much as I would have in the days before this class.

"Anger," I say finally.

"About?"

"About the struggle."

"The struggle to … ?"

"… accept what I can't change and change myself where I need to."

My husband sits beside me on an antique love seat. Nelson at 52 has a disease that has dramatically rearranged our lives. After years of unusual symptoms and going from doctor to doctor, he was diagnosed with a rare disease called Dementia with Lewy Body disease. It has similarities to Alzheimer's. I struggle endlessly it seems to accept and adjust.

"Ginnie," Bernie says softly, " I want you to look at Nelson." I turn to face him. "Nelson, I want to make *you* the problem, but you're not. Please be patient with me." She prompts me, a phrase at a time, and I repeat these words after her, familiar by now with the process.

Then it is Nelson's turn to talk to me. He too follows her cue. "Ginnie, I will try to be patient with you as you work on changing you. What can I do to help?"

"I haven't the foggiest," I say somewhat flippantly, and the class erupts in laughter.

Is this a unique Sunday school class? Very much so. Is this a unique day in class? Not at all.

Our class was born out of my need. I react to new carpeting with sinus inflammation and flu-like symptoms that cause me to be sick for days at best, weeks at worst. When my former Sunday school classroom was newly carpeted, Nelson and I were in the midst of a crisis brought about by his disease and my reactions to environmental irritants. I needed a safe place to be so that I could continue to attend the class.

The parsonage living room was offered, and I consented to teach a class from a devotional book I was using at the time that focused on wholeness and healing. We met for a year, sharing daily struggles, praying with and for each other and establishing trusting and supportive relationships.

At the end of a year we were nearing the end of the devotional. I had a definite sense that we had made what progress we could with the resources we had. We had struggled to answer questions about anger, joy, faith, fear and doubt. Some things just seemed not to have answers. We discussed as a class where to go from there. It was clear we wanted to continue the class's caring and sharing with a focus on wholeness.

Bernie had just begun coming to our church and had been delighted to find and attend a class on healing. She told us about her training in something called "theotherapy," meaning "God heals." She offered her training as a resource to our class.

A journey of emotional healing began for a class of about eight.

In this class we have come to see that many of our conflicts that cause "dis-ease" are rooted in the unmet needs of our childhood. We have brought these needs into the present and are looking to have spouses, family, friends and the church meet them.

Because of this we have learned to say, "I am the problem." I remember one of the first times I connected the present to the past. I was talking on the phone to my daughter, who was away at college, when she began to carry

Correction: In Wilbert R. Shenk's article "Mission Past, Mission Future" (Jan. 4) some words were omitted from the third sentence of the second paragraph of the last column. The sentence should read, "Yet powerful influences tell us mission is only one of many programs of the church."

CLEO Photography—for illustration only

on a side conversation with her friends. I seethed as I put the receiver of the phone away from my ear. Why am I so angry? I wondered. When have I felt this way before? I have learned to ask. It was then I recognized the feeling that I am not important. That is what I felt as a child in the middle of a large family. There always seemed to be someone else more important, more needy, more vocal or more able to get attention. The Spirit had just identified an unmet need from my childhood perceptions that I was still trying to have met in my adult experience.

Our class has come to understand that as young children we position our parents as gods, rightly expecting them to meet all our needs. To forgive our parents for their inability to be God and meet all our needs, we must grieve the losses and the consequences. In effect we must take God out of our parents and our parents out of our understanding of God. Over and over as I have found myself feeling I am not important, I have gone into the pain of those feelings, re-experienced and expressed my loss, then verbalized my forgiveness. I now see why Jesus said to forgive 70 times seven. The losses we experience as children shape our lives, and one "I forgive you" doesn't reshape us. It takes many.

We have come to see that with each loss that we grieve and forgive, we are letting go of treating our parents as God; we die to the self that believed another person could meet our needs. Then we turn toward the one God who can and will meet every need. As we do this, we have experienced a letting go of the need we had carried around for our spouses, friends, church or our family to shore us up and give us our self-esteem or self-worth or confidence. We have experienced the Spirit of God moving into the places emptied by our confessions of fear, anger and guilt and have come to know God and the truth of his unconditional and everlasting love.

The ministry of theotherapy is unique in that it draws from a variety of schools of psychological thought. It uses psychological principles that are either represented in God's Word or are not in opposition to the Word of God to move people toward mental health. Its purpose is twofold: It seeks to cooperate with the Holy Spirit to move individuals toward their own resolution of inner conflicts and then to train those who feel called to ministry to facilitate the healing of others.

Theotherapy was established by Mario Rivera, a Presbyterian minister who was also a physical therapist and psychologist. He began in his ministry to see the interconnectedness of spirit, soul and body and to see the need for a model of healing for the soul. As a result he founded Theotherapy Seminars Inc.

The Spirit of God brought Bernie's presence and training to our class at a time of need. The journey that theotherapy has started me on has had a profound impact on my life, though the journey has only begun. God has shown me the need for truthfulness in my relationship with him. At the same time he has shown me that much of what I experience emotionally results from distortions of truth formed in childhood experiences and perceptions. "I am not important" is understood as an untruth as I turn to the God who created me and find my value in the unconditional, everlasting love of my Creator.

Others in the class have experienced similar insights. A member who was on medication for high blood pressure has seen her blood pressure drop since she started the class.

Through this class I have come to value emotions as a gift that God uses to take us to our personal place of neediness and powerlessness. I have watched as God has replaced that neediness and powerlessness with his presence and power. Relationships with those around me change as I come to depend on God instead of others to meet my deepest needs. Little by little I have owned my feelings before God and have felt his healing Spirit move into the spaces of my being, forming in me a new creation.

Ginnie Burkholder lives in Canton, Ohio.

Through this class I have come to value emotions as a gift that God uses to take us to our personal place of neediness and powerlessness. I have watched as God has replaced that neediness and powerlessness with his presence and power.

Information about theotherapy can be obtained by writing Theotherapy Seminars Inc., 4276 Saltsburg Road, Murrysville, PA 15668-9777, or calling 412-793-7748; fax 412-798-0223.

Wherever is heard an encouraging word?

Study: Church falls short in promoting pastorate

Mennonite youth and young adults hold positive views of pastoral ministry but say they lack encouragement to enter the profession, according to a recent survey. And that has church officials examining ways to better identify and call out candidates for the pastorate.

"Our denomination does not have enough of a culture of encouragement for the vocation of pastoral ministry," says Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.

The survey was sponsored by Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, Mennonite Board of Education and the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church Canada ministerial leadership offices. Called the Samuel Project, it found that 36 percent of GC, Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church Canada high school youth say that their congregations are somewhat or definitely not encouraging them to consider pastoral ministry. Another 33 percent were uncertain, and 30 percent said they were somewhat or definitely encouraged.

A lack of encouragement was also reported by people with an in-depth exposure to the pastorate. Forty-four percent of ministerial students and Ministry Inquiry Program (MIP) participants said congregational leaders were intentional in encouraging people to be pastors. But 37 percent were uncertain, and 19 percent said congregational leaders were not intentionally encouraging candidates for pastoral ministry.

At the same time, survey participants said they recognize the pastorate as a calling for certain people. "The primary reasons why persons go into the ministry tend to be spiritual in nature and related to personal giftedness," the survey reported.

"There's a disconnect between that positive perception [survey participants] report and the lack of encouragement they are receiving," says Keith Harder, director of GC Ministerial Leadership Services.

The bottom line, he says, is whether the church is calling people God has called.

Church officials are now considering a variety of responses, including developing more intentional relationships among the denomination, area conferences and congregations to call potential candidates for pastoral ministry.

"I think the home congregation should be the primary context in which a young person tests abilities and … sense of call of vocation and then goes off to prepare for some form of ministry with a clear sense of [congregational] blessing and sense of financial backing," Kraybill says.

He says that happens now but that it is more the exception than the rule.

There are many theories why. Harder thinks the church no longer plays the important role it once did in people's lives. "If the church becomes more marginal, you're probably less likely to encourage your son or daughter to work in the church," he says.

Palmer Becker, director of Hesston (Kan.) College's pastoral ministries program, says the demands and pressures on pastors may scare away church members from suggesting such a vocation. "There's just all kinds of other ways for people to serve," says Becker, who has developed a list of ways to tap potential pastors on the shoulder.

Another factor, Kraybill says, is the concept of the priesthood of all believers. "At times we have couched that in language that dilutes the identity of pastoral leadership in the church," he says.

Kraybill couples that with a diminished view of authority held by the church, which he says started in the 1960s.

The survey's findings help fuel concerns about a shortage of pastors. Forty-seven percent of ministerial students at Mennonite schools said they foresee a lack of qualified people for the pastorate. Thirty-one percent were uncertain, while 23 percent did not believe there was a problem.

U.S. GC and Mennonite Church congregations have 132 pastoral openings (including full- and part-time lead, associate and youth positions) with only 30 names on the official denominational list of candidates. "I'm getting a call at least once a week from churches kind of desperate for pastors," Becker says.

Mennonite Board of Education president Orville Yoder said the issue is not one of recruiting students for ministerial programs. Rather, it is about the church sending people to prepare for the pastorate. "Philosophically, that's the right way," he says.—*Rich Preheim*

Samuel says: some survey findings

Asked of Ministerial Inquiry Program and ministerial students: Are congregational leaders intentional in encouraging people to be pastors?

MIP students
- Definitely yes: 5 percent
- Yes: 38 percent
- Uncertain: 40 percent
- Probably no: 16 percent
- Definitely no: 1 percent

Ministerial students
- Definitely yes: 6 percent
- Yes: 38 percent
- Uncertain: 35 percent
- Probably no: 19 percent
- Definitely no: 1 percent

Asked of high school youth: Are teens in your congregation being encouraged to consider pastoral ministry?
- Definitely yes: 5 percent
- Somewhat yes: 25 percent
- Uncertain: 33 percent
- Somewhat no: 27 percent
- Definitely no: 8 percent

Asked of high school youth: Do young people in the church see the pastorate as a resepcted and desirable vocation?
- Definitely yes: 13 percent
- Probably yes: 46 percent
- Uncertain: 26 percent
- Generally no: 14 percent
- Definitely no: 0.2 percent

Note: Because of rounding, numbers may not add up to 100 percent.

MCC concluding quake relief efforts in Turkey but exploring new response in Venezuela

As Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) brings its earthquake-relief project to a close in Turkey, a team is visiting Venezuela to assess needs there following last month's landslides that killed at least 30,000 people and left 150,000 homeless.

The Venezuela visit comes at the behest of Eastern Mennonite Missions. The assessment team includes EMM and MCC representatives. MCC also asked a representative from MENCOLDES, the Colombian Mennonite relief and development agency, to join the team.

MCC has no partners in Venezuela and has not previously worked there. There are at least four Anabaptist church bodies in the country with a combined membership of about 600. EMM relates closely with these church organizations.

Close to a month after the Dec. 15, 1999, landslides, rescue workers are continuing to evacuate thousands still living in high-risk areas. Efforts to relocate survivors and recover the dead are far from complete. Recent rains have triggered small landslides that further hamper relief efforts. Venezuelan officials note that the rain complicates the situation but is not life threatening.

Government officials report that the greatest need is for pure drinking water and sanitation facilities. Most schools were destroyed, and those still standing have been converted into shelters for the homeless.

In Turkey, MCC, in partnership with Rosedale Mennonite Missions, provided $250,000 in assistance, including winterized tents, school kits and elevated tent platforms. The August 1999 earthquake killed more than 17,000 people and left thousands homeless. Many of the homeless are living in tent cities on the outskirts of the main cities hit by the quake.

MCC and Rosedale, the mission board of the Conservative Mennonite Conference, recently spent $92,500 for the purchase of about 2,000 floor pallets for the tents. Many of the non-winterized tents have been wrapped with plastic sheeting to keep them dry, but the base still sits in mud. "Elevated pallets will help alleviate some of the discomfort this causes," says Janet M. Janzen, co-director of MCC's Middle East department.

Earlier, MCC and Rosedale contributed $142,500 for 200 winterized tents. Each tent holds approximately 10 people. The agencies also spent $15,000 to provide 300 school kits consisting of a school uniform, a pair of shoes and various school supplies.—*MCC News Service*

CPT marchers protest grant to game maker

CHICAGO—Twenty-five peace activists joined a Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT)-organized march on Chicago's City Hall Jan. 6 to protest a $2.2 million grant given to the maker of "Mortal Kombat," a video game which includes characters who tear organs from their rivals.

The Chicago City Council last month approved the grant to Chicago-based Midway Games Inc. to induce the corporation to stay in the city. "Public money should not be going to companies that sell violent toys for children," CPT trainee Erin Kindy told the Associated Press.

The Epiphany Day demonstrators, including three dressed as magi, met with a representative of Chicago Mayor Richard Daley.

GCMC photo by Ivan Friesen

An ardent fan of mission work

Peter and Mary Derksen, Commission on Overseas Mission workers to Japan, visit with Adeline Kaufman (center) of Freeman, S.D., during a visit to the area. The Derksens, now itinerating across North America, hold the record for the longest tenure of COM service: 46 years by the time they retire this summer. For the last 15 years, the 96-year-old Kaufman, a member of Salem Mennonite Church of Freeman, has been one the Derksens' most faithful supporters, praying for the Derksens and the people they work with. But Kaufman's support has also been more tangible. "She has written to us regularly, at least once a month, if not more," Mary Derksen says. "She has sent us small gifts as well as financial support [to COM] for our work." Kaufman became connected with the Derksens through her Women in Mission (now Mennonite Women) group at Salem.

GCMC photo by Gary Isaac

In preparation for collating and stapling, Jean Isaac covers a bed with pages of a Bible study booklet written by a women's theology group in Umtata, South Africa. Isaac, an Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission worker in South Africa, is editor of the series of Bible studies the group has produced.

Bible studies offer Southern exposure

South African materials could benefit North Americans

NEWTON, Kan.—Jean Isaac believes South African women have something to offer North Americans looking for Bible study material.

Isaac and her husband, Gary, are Commission on Overseas Mission appointees to Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, serving in Umtata, South Africa. For the past decade, she has been involved with the Umtata Women's Theology Group, which has been writing its own Bible study materials since the 1980s.

This group of mostly professional women, both white and black South Africans, felt they were "biblically illiterate, even though they had gone to church all their lives," Isaac says. "So they decided to start a Bible study group. They wondered if the Bible had a particular message for women, and they began looking at the Bible that way."

Before long, the women were developing their own Bible study materials based on what they were discovering. There are now 10 titles in the series, with an 11th close to completion.

The booklets, each about 30 to 40 pages, originate in regular group meetings where members brainstorm topics. A topic is assigned to a team of two group members. They choose biblical texts and develop questions, then the entire group does the study together to test and refine it.

Isaac serves as editor and physically puts the booklets together. They are printed from computers and photocopied.

Although the group consists largely of educated, professional women—teachers, professors, government offices staff members, health-care workers—its vision is for the English-language Bible studies to be as widely accessible as possible. A number of the booklets have been translated into the Xhosa language and several into Afrikaans. A booklet on AIDS has been translated into Zulu as well.

Now Isaac would like to see the booklets reach a wider audience. "One reason is that for North Americans to use materials [from] a South African setting creates a South-North exchange," she says. "So much of the time people of the Southern Hemisphere have used books or materials produced by those living in the North.

"Also, using these books provides exposure to the life situations other people face in their cultural setting and the opportunity to learn from them. And finally, there is the opportunity to compare and contrast the issues people face in their lives and Christian walks."

The General Conference Mennonite Church's Women in Mission and now the integrated Mennonite Women has been promoting the Bible study series for several years.

"What I like is the way the women have identified their needs and created this material to speak to them," says Mennonite Women co-coordinator Susan Jantzen. "It's proactive."

Franconia Conference moderator Donella Clemens received a set of the booklets while visiting South Africa. "The Umtata women's group has produced materials that are an authentic and courageous attempt to speak directly to some very difficult issues of life," she says. "Many of those issues are not unlike those experienced by women around the world." *—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and AIMM news services*

Bible study titles: from birth to death

- *Women, the Bible and the Contemporary Church: An Introduction to Women's Theology*
- *Matriarch, Judge, Foreigner and Liberator: Four Women of the Old Testament*
- *The Other Disciples of Jesus: Women in the New Testament*
- *Towards a Theology of Sexuality: Sexuality and Pregnancy, Abortion and Contraception, Rape and Battering*
- *God, Our Loving Parent: Bible Studies on AIDS*
- *When Two Become One: Bible Studies on Marriage*
- *When Two Become More: Bible Studies on Parenting*
- *When One Is Alone: Bible Studies on Singleness*
- *When Two Part Ways: Bible Studies on Separation and Divorce*
- *When One Grows Old: Bible Studies on Aging*
- *When Life's Journey Ends: Bible Studies on Bereavement, Death and Grief* (coming in 2000)

Booklets are available from the Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission.

Conference has worker considering importance of interreligious talks

KOBE, Japan—Mennonites might not usually be the first to come to mind as representatives of Christianity at interreligious conferences. But Russell Sawatsky says he recently found himself as that when he served as a resource person for a November 1999 conference in Kobe on "The World Religions: Finding Ways Toward Justice and Peace in the 21st Century."

Sawatsky and his wife, Etsuko, are Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions workers in Japan. At the conference, he joined representatives of Pure Land Buddhism, Sikhism, Islam, Roman Catholicism and Judaism. The conference was held for students at area international high schools.

"Inasmuch as Mennonites represent a particular emphasis within Christianity, perhaps we bring something to a conference such as this that would not be found in representatives from other Christian traditions," Sawatsky says.

Each representative presented a workshop on their faith; Sawatsky spoke on Mennonite history and the peace position. That was followed by a panel discussion of all representatives.

"It was perhaps a new thing for some [children of missionaries] to disagree with another person's religious beliefs while at the same time listening to him or her in a respectful manner," Sawatsky says. "Some of those students found it particularly difficult to accept the perspective expressed by the Sikh representative: many different paths to the top of the same mountain, or the different religions are like different petals on the same flower."

An Indian student asked the panel what the Christian perspective was on the different religions. "I pointed out that it is a basic belief of Christians that Jesus Christ is God's ultimate effort at reaching out to human beings and that, as Christians, we believe that if we wish to know God, Jesus Christ is the person who shows us the way to that knowledge," Sawatsky says. "I then said that with respect to the ultimate destiny of each person, it was not our business to judge or say that such and such a person is going to hell because he or she is not a Christian.

"This Indian fellow then said that he had been told explicitly that he was going to hell because he is not a Christian. I didn't say so, but I thought that expressing such sentiments can hardly be considered an effective way of engaging in Christian witness."

Sawatsky says the question could be raised whether the conference was a legitimate aspect of Christian mission. Shouldn't mission workers be about the business of speaking of the faith for the purpose of calling people to Christ?

"Clearing up misconceptions is an important [part of] Christian witness, I believe," Sawatsky says. "Becoming acquainted with the attitudes and emotions held by members of other faith communities is also valuable in understanding how to speak and live as a Christian in a way that communicates good news to others. … I look forward to [other] such opportunities."
—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service

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AMBS picks Bluffton professor as new dean

ELKHART, Ind.—Loren Johns, a religion professor at Bluffton (Ohio) College since 1993, has been named dean of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, beginning in June.

Johns holds a doctorate from Princeton (N.J.) Theological Seminary, a master's degree from AMBS and a bachelor's degree from Goshen (Ind.) College. He will succeed Willard Swartley as dean, who had announced his intention to step down prior to a November 1999 heart attack. Faculty member Jacob Elias has been serving as interim dean.

Prior to joining the Bluffton faculty, Johns was theology book editor for Herald Press in Scottdale, Pa., pastor of Blough Mennonite Church in Hollsopple, Pa., and an overseer in Allegheny Conference. A member of First Mennonite Church in Bluffton, Johns is author of numerous articles on biblical studies, with concentration on Revelation.

Canadian, Filipino schools start exchange

WINNIPEG—A Filipino student is the first to attend Canadian Mennonite Bible College under a new exchange program with Silliman University Divinity School in Dumaguete, Philippines. Dennis Solon, in the fifth year of a six-year bachelor of theology degree program at Silliman, will study at CMBC until April. CMBC hopes to select a student to go to Silliman from June to December.

MCC Canada names new executive director

WINNIPEG—A former Mennonite Central Committee Canada administrator and current Mennonite Brethren missions director has been named MCC Canada's new executive director.

Dave Dyck, acting general director of Mennonite Brethren Missions and Services International, will head up MCC Canada's work from March 2000 until August 2001. Dyck, who was Canadian programs director for MCC Canada from 1975 to 1988, will succeed Marv Frey. Frey has been MCC Canada executive director since 1994 and will become program director at Canadian Foodgrains Bank.—*MCC Canada News Service*

MBM photo

Ready for RAD

Steve Wutz of New Middletown, Ohio, is commissioned Dec. 17, 1999, to serve in Northern Ireland with RAD (Reaching and Discipling), a short-term program administered by the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Board of Missions. Nineteen participants were commissioned for outreach in Chile, Ireland, Mexico and South Africa. The service was held at Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.

by the way ...

Orie Miller, longtime Mennonite Central Committee executive secretary who also helped organize Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Economic Development Associates, Menno Travel and other organizations, was three times rejected by the lot for the pastorate.
—*Mennonite Encyclopedia*

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Births

Blosser, Quinn Thomas, Dec. 17, 1999, received for adoption Dec. 22, 1999, by Mary (Mast) and Thomas Blosser, Columbus, Ohio.

Brininger, Felicity Anne, Dec. 28, to David and Nicole (Nice) Brininger, Parsonsburg, Md.

Byler, Kristyn Elizabeth, Dec. 21, to Juanita (Plank) and Steve Byler, Belleville, Ohio.

Comardelle, Brielle Reneé, Nov. 29, to Christopher and Mellisa (Holliman) Comardelle, Kiln, Miss.

Eitzen, Emma Lindsey, July 10, 1998, received for adoption Dec. 6, 1999, by Dirk and Myrna (Miller) Eitzen, Lititz, Pa.

Engel, Noah David, Nov. 5, to David and Mary (Reische) Engel, Congerville, Ill.

Flaming, Cassie Lyn, Dec. 28, to Amy (Grant) and Bill Flaming, McPherson, Kan.

Gottfried, Sarah Taylor, Nov. 21, to Erik and Rosella (Hershberger) Gottfried, Palo Alto, Pa.

Heidebrecht, Conrad Ray Brubacher, Dec. 13, to Carmen Brubacher and Paul Heidebrecht, Elkhart, Ind.

Hunsberger, Molly Elizabeth, Dec. 30, to Gabrielle and Ron Hunsberger Jr., Newtown, Pa.

Keiser, Simon Hartman, Jan. 3, to Lori and Steve Hartman Keiser, Columbus, Ohio.

King, Molly Rose, Dec. 20, to Bruce and Patricia (Martin) King, East Petersburg, Pa.

Krieger, Courtney Marie, Nov. 2, to Kim and Shawn Krieger, Fayette, Ohio.

Lapp, Joseph Aaron, Dec. 27, to Kevin and Sherry (Goss) Lapp, Lancaster, Pa.

Limas, Christopher Henry, Nov. 30, to Christopher and MaryBeth (Wayner) Limas, Chicago Heights, Ill.

Martin, Olivia Kate, Dec. 26, to Delphine (Martin) and Jeff Martin, Lancaster, Pa.

Miller, Alisha Lyn, Dec. 24, to John and Sara Ann (Raber) Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.

Shreiner, Rachel Noel, Dec. 22, to Cheryl (Scheetz) and Timothy Shreiner, Telford, Pa.

Stefanowicz, Matthew James, Dec. 18, to Amy (Landis) and Jason Stefanowicz, Telford, Pa.

Weber, Laura MaryJane, Dec. 29, to Tim and Wendy (Pfohl) Weber, Conestogo, Ont.

Wickersham, Daniel Paul, Dec. 21, to Mike and Paula Wickersham, Middlebury, Ind.

Woodburn, Zackery William Ozias, Dec. 20, to Doug and Pam (Burkhart) Woodburn, Drayton, Ont.

Yoder, Jacob Noel, Nov. 6, to Angie and John Yoder, Allensville, Pa.

Yoder, Reylyn Wayne, Nov. 23, to Lori (Yoder) and Steve Yoder, Middlebury, Ind.

Marriages

Bechtold/Erb: Sheena Bechtold, Elizabethtown, Pa., and Jeremy Erb, Elizabethtown, Dec. 17 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Cable/Kephart: Melvin Cable, Boswell, Pa., and Rachel Kephart, Martindale, Pa., Dec. 18 at Martindale Alliance Church.

Hartill/Miller: William Hartill IV, Kalamazoo, Mich., and Nicole Miller, Indianapolis Nov. 26 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Krabill/Weirich: Ruth Krabill, Columbia, Mo., and Scott Weirich, Denver, Dec. 11 at Missouri Manor, Columbia, Mo.

McElmurry/Pfahler: Karen McElmurry, Goshen, Ind., and Lee Pfahler, Goshen, Dec. 18 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Reyer/Reynolds: Dorene Reyer, Saucier, Miss., and Phillip Reynolds, Gulfport, Miss., Dec. 3 at Saucier.

Deaths

Kropf, Ivan, 92, Molalla, Ore., died Dec. 15. Spouse: Pearl Kropf (deceased). Survivors: children Bonnie Burck, Claudia Lapp, Judy Hall, Helen Grove; 12 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 18 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

McReaken, Cathyren Wagner, 85, Glendale, Ariz., died Dec. 23. Spouse: Al McReaken (deceased). Parents: John and Lena Wagner (deceased). Survivors: daughter Jeannine Nolan; four grandchildren; seven great-grandchilden. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Neuhouser, Marie Lickey, 90, Fort Wayne, Ind., died Dec. 28. Spouse: Simon Neuhouser (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 31 at Spencerville, Ind.

Ruble, Vera Vogelsang, 88, Washington, Ill., died Dec. 23 of a stroke and heart attack. Spouse: Leslie Ruble (deceased). Parents: Ralph and Lottie Zinser Vogelsang (deceased). Survivors: son Ralph; one grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Washington.

Stauffer, Paul, 91, Orrville, Ohio, died Dec. 21. Spouse: Evelyn Gratz (deceased). Parents: John and Laura Erney Stauffer (deceased). Survivors: children Jean McConnell, Ann Nofziger; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 23 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Wenger, Mary Roth, 88, Swedesburg, Iowa, died Dec. 16. Spouse: Emery Wenger. Parents: Henry and Mary Guth Roth (deceased). Other survivors: children David, Mildred Gingerich, Beulah Steiner, Mary Headings; 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 20 at Wayland, Iowa.

Wind, Walter, 88, Washington, Ill., died Dec. 24. Spouse: Ann Wind. Parents: William and Matilda Garber Wind (deceased). Other survivors: children Donald, Judy, Joan Wind Brown; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington.

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- **Towamencin Mennonite Church** in Kulpsville, Pa., is seeking an ***administrative assistant*** with computer skills to work about 10 hours a week in church office. Call 215-723-1280.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks full-time ***Spanish teacher*** to begin as soon as possible. Contact Barbara Moses, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; 215-769-5363.

- **Clinton Frame Mennonite Church** has ***used church pews*** for sale, seating capacity around 450, in lengths of 12, 14½ and 18 feet; blond wood with padded seats. Interested people may contact Duane Stutzman, 219-642-3231; email duanes@skyenet.net

- **Locust Grove Mennonite Church**, Belleville, Pa., seeks a full-time ***youth pastor***. Youth ministry experience preferred. Inquiries/resumes to Max Zook, 3358 W. Main St., Belleville, PA 17004; 717-935-2164; email maxzook@juno.com

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has an opening for a ***couple*** for a long-term voluntary service assignment. For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **First Mennonite Church**, Iowa City, Iowa. seeks a half-time position for ***minister of church community life***. Candidate should be committed to Anabaptist faith and have strong interest in work with congregational community life development. Focus is in area of small groups and integration of youth and young adults into congregational life.

  Contact Search Committee chair, First Mennonite Church, 405 Myrtle Ave., Iowa City, IA 52246; 319-338-3463; email joy-sutter@uiowa.edu; web site www.jccn.iowa-city.ia.us/~fmcic/index.htm

- **Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute** invites applications for the position of ***principal*** to begin July 2000. MBCI has a student body of 560 (grade 7 to senior IV) and a professional staff of 40 teachers.

  Address inquiries and applications by Feb. 29 to Search Committee, 180 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E8; 204-667-8210; fax 204-661-5091; email mbcis@mbnet.mb.ca

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** is seeking a ***director of social services***. This full-time position requires a minimum of a BSW and basic computer skills. Desire person experienced in geriatrics in a supervisory capacity. Experience or interest in people with memory impairment helpful.

  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-581-3936.

- **Waterford Mennonite Church**, a 400-member congregation located in Goshen, Ind., seeks a ***minister of worship and music*** to lead and resource blended worship. Work includes both demonstrating and involving members in worship planning, worship leading and music. Effective communicator, musical versatility, able to plan and stimulate positive team relationships, encourage and empower involvement of people of all ages. Degree from Anabaptist-Mennonite seminary preferred. This position, along with other pastoral team responsibilities, could be a full-time position.

  Contact Joseph S. Miller, pastor, 65975 State Road 15, Goshen, IN 46526; email josmiller@juno.com

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by Gordon Houser

A list of recent books, videos and CDs that may be helpful as we follow Jesus:

Roots of Violence in the U.S. Culture: A Diagnosis Towards Healing by Alain J. Richard (Blue Dolphin Publishing, 1999, $14.95 plus postage and handling) exposes the origins and current causes of the underlying, explosive rage pervasive in our culture. Order from Blue Dolphin Publishing, P.O. Box 8, Nevada City, CA 95959, <bdolphin@netshel.net>.

The Amish in Their Own Words by Brad Igou (Herald Press, 1999, $19.99) offers writings by Amish people across North America, compiled from the first 25 years (1968-1992) of *Family Life*, a monthly Amish magazine. Igou includes letters, articles, history lessons, parables, questions, challenges—a wide spectrum of human experience, from an Amish point of view.

Managing God's Gifts by Robert Veitch, Edwin Friesen and Dave Kroeker (Mennonite Foundation of Canada, 1999, $35 Cdn. for book and video) is a nine-lesson series that treats the following topics: good news, contentment, generosity, money, accumulation, estate planning, skills and abilities, time and creation. Order from MFC, 303-32025 Dahlstrom Ave., Abbotsford, BC V2T 2K7, <mfcabbot@gctel.ca>.

Mennonite Recipes from the Shenandoah Valley by Phyllis Pellman Good and Kate Good (Good Books, 1999, $14.95) offers hundreds of dishes from a tradition that combines German Mennonite cooking with that of the old South.

Sexuality: God's Gift, edited by Anne Krabill Hershberger (Herald Press, 1999, $14.99), presents Christian resources for living a sexually healthy and fulfilling life, regardless of one's circumstances.

Bach for All Seasons (Augsburg, 1999, choirbook and compact disc, $16.98 each) honors the 250th anniversary of composer Johann Sebastian Bach's death in 1750. The choirbook is a collection of 30 vocal works including choral movements and chorales from cantatas and other works. The accompanying CD includes selections from the choirbook.

Toward Justice, Peace and Compassion: The MCC U.S. Washington Office International Economics Issues Packet by Martin Shupack (Mennonite Central Committee, 1999, $3) is designed for Mennonites and Brethren in Christ who want to learn more about economic issues and find ways to become advocates for more just international economic policies. Order from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, <mailbox@mcc.org>.

Also available from Mennonite Central Committee are *Rose: A Story of Faith and Courage in Calcutta* by Glen E. Miller (MCC, 1999, $5) and *Exploring the Wisdom of Africa* by Harold F. Miller and Ron Rempel (MCC, 1999, $1.25).

Come, Lord Jesus: Devotional Readings from The Imitation of Christ, edited by David Hazard (Bethany House, 1999, $8.99), contains 40 short devotions in modern language based on the classic devotional book by Thomas à Kempis.

Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science & Theology by William A. Dembski (InterVarsity Press, 1999, $19.99) shows how the criterion of "specified complexity" reliably detects design and intelligent agency in nature—without presupposing a belief in God or the Bible.

What Mennonites Are Thinking, 1999, edited by Merle Good and Phyllis Pellman Good (Good Books, 1999, $11.95), includes essays about identity, controversial opinion, fiction and poetry, international cross-cultural features, film capsules and book reviews.

More Than Houses by Millard Fuller (Word, 1999, $12.99) presents stories of volunteers, home owners and others who have had their lives and neighborhoods changed as a result of Habitat for Humanity.

Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship With God by Dallas Willard (InterVarsity Press, 1999, $11.99) invites readers to move beyond communication with God to companionship with God, to enter the richness of the Way of Jesus. It is a re-release of his earlier book *In Search of Guidance*.

Thomas Merton and the Monastic Vision by Lawrence S. Cunningham (Eerdmans, 1999, $16) explores Merton's monastic life and his subsequent growth into a modern-day spiritual master. Cunningham shows that Merton's prolific writings and his continuing influence can only be understood against the background of his contemplative experience as a Trappist monk.

Recommended reading

Spiritual Rx: Prescriptions for Living a Meaningful Life by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat (Hyperion, 1999, $23.95) is a companion to the authors' *Spiritual Literacy: Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life* (Scribner, 1996, $27.50). Both volumes are aids to what the Brussats call "the path of practice." In the earlier book they introduced an alphabet of spiritual practices that reveals the sacred in daily life. *Spiritual Rx* "consists of remedies, wisdom and recommended activities for all those taking up the spiritual life." Their approach is eclectic, which will draw some and repel others. They presume that "everything we do is practice. . . . How a Christian acts at work on Monday is as significant as attendance at church on Sunday." Many readers will find helpful insights and resources to aid them in their spiritual practices.—*gh*

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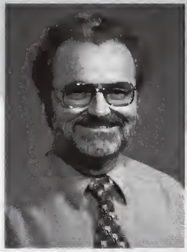

J. Lorne Peachey

Y2K: It was the worst of times, it was the best of times

We made it. The lights didn't go out or the water stop running. Nor did the change from 1999 to 2000 herald the end of the world, Armageddon or the second coming of Christ.

We should have known better, particularly about the latter. Jesus made it quite clear that no one knows when time will end except God, who isn't telling (Mark 13:32).

I also got suspicious early on about other Y2K predictions. If those making them really believed what they were saying, why did we have to pay for their books? Since you can't take it with you, wouldn't it have made more sense to give the advice away free and prepare more people, particularly the poor, from the disasters they were predicting?

No, much of what happened around Y2K was not our finest hour. We somehow convinced ourselves that the technology we had created would let us down. Losing faith in creativity and innovation, we gave way to the baser instinct of survival. I've heard of at least one community with a large concentration of Mennonites in which store shelves were empty of milk, bread and toilet paper as midnight approached on Dec. 31, 1999.

But if we were not at our best in letting go of the old, we did much better welcoming the new. Because of my wife Emily's continuing battle with cancer, which keeps her out of crowds and away from noise, we spent a quiet New Year's Eve at home. I wasn't planning to watch as much TV as I did, but I got caught up in the global millennial celebrations, especially as carried on PBS.

Gradually it dawned on me that I was watching a historic event—as historic as the assassination of John F. Kennedy or Neil Armstrong's first step on the moon, two events I catalog my life by. For perhaps the first time in human history, people around the world were celebrating the same thing at roughly the same time. The global community was focused on something other than war and violence. For me it was a moving experience, one I thank God I have been alive to see.

Of course, after you've seen fireworks in Auckland, Beijing and Bethlehem, you know what they're going to look like in London, New York, Toronto and the Samoas. And no matter what your race or culture, you can only jump so high to show you're celebrating when the music is loud and the TV cameras are on you.

But something else also came through to me out of the glitter and hype. In country after country, when they had a chance to speak to a PBS reporter, people talked about peace. They dreamed of a world of justice. They showed deep feelings about friendship, kindness, honor and integrity.

For me those dreams came together in one poignant moment in the celebrations. Standing in the South African prison cell where he had spent 18 years under apartheid, Nelson Mandela lit a candle of peace and gave it to a group of children. That was Y2K at its best.

Will the dream of peace and justice go with us into the next millennium? The silly things we did in anticipation of Y2K bugs make me wonder. Yet the change of millennia headed us in that direction. Instead of reading news stories about Y2K calamities, we saw leadership change in one of the most repressive countries of the century, Russia, without a shot fired. We witnessed 155 hostages released after eight days on a plane through negotiation rather than violence. We watched the change of ownership of the Panama Canal with handshakes and smiles rather than guns and bombs.

Suppose we became as diligent in bringing about peace and justice as we were in making sure Y2K disasters didn't happen. Suppose we spent as much energy on finding new ways to feed the hungry and heal the sick as we did to make sure our computers didn't let us down when they went from 99 to 00. Then the coming years would see things much more miraculous than anything we have witnessed so far.

God is with us on this one: "O people, the Lord has already told you what is good, and this is what he requires: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

Realizing the dream will take much more than human effort. We must join with Jesus as he prays, "Your kingdom come, your will be done" (Matthew 6:10). If that were to become the prayer of humanity for the next millennium, Y3K, if it happens, will surely be the best of celebrations.—*jlp*

What might happen if we spent as much energy on finding new ways to feed the hungry and heal the sick as we did to make sure our computers didn't let us down when they went from 99 to 00?

Oversight: In our Dec. 28, 1999, issue, we failed to give credit to David Alleman, Harrisonburg, Va., for preparing the subject index for us. Our apologies for this oversight.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

January 25, 2000

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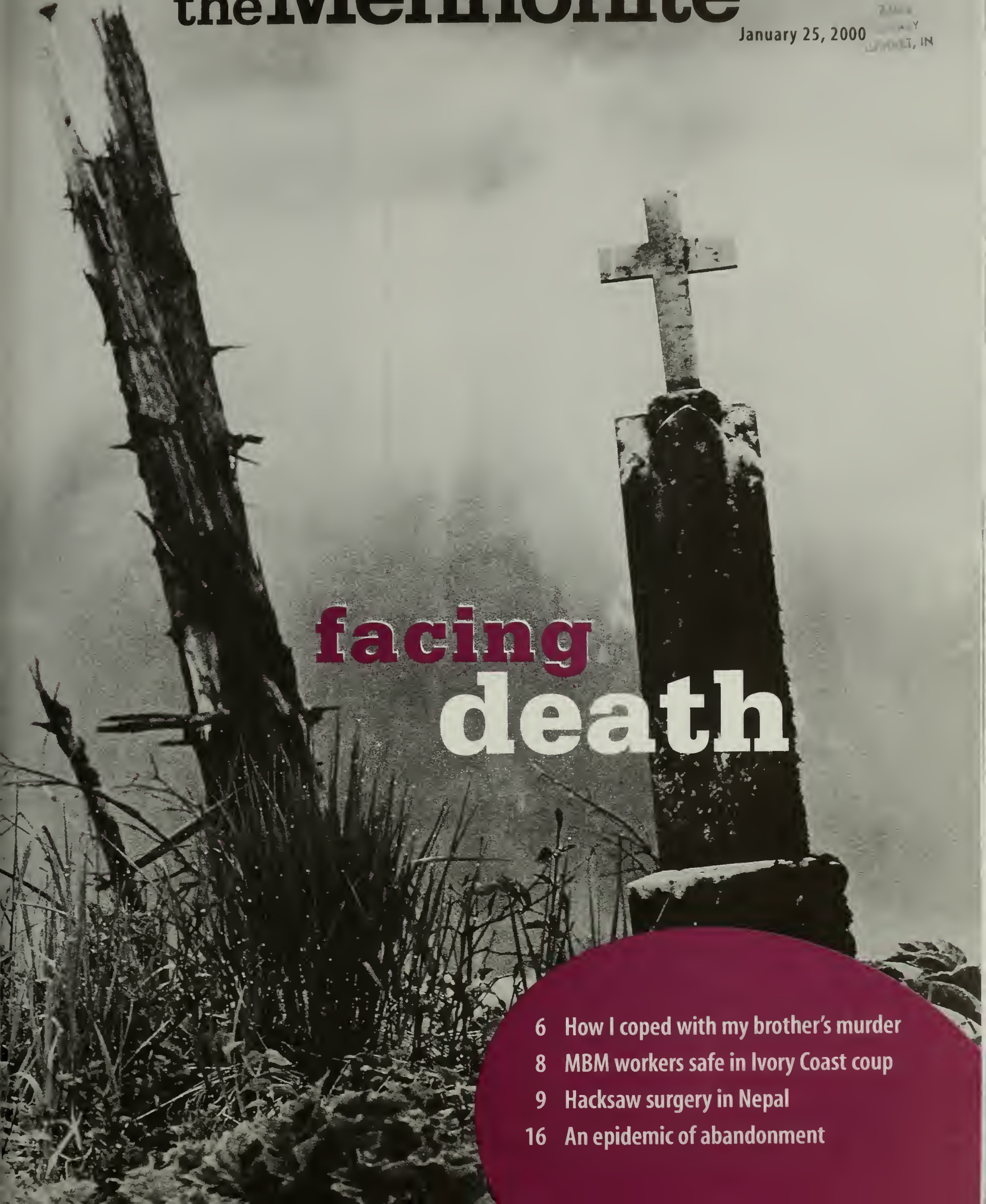

facing death

6 How I coped with my brother's murder
8 MBM workers safe in Ivory Coast coup
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16 An epidemic of abandonment

Giving and receiving

Cheers to Tim Lind for lifting up gift giving as a metaphor (and reality) for our global church community ("Gift Sharing in the Global Church," Jan. 4). I especially appreciated his insight that authentic gifting is always fluid and dynamic, that we have as much to receive as to give.

When I first went into Mennonite Central Committee "service," I imagined that I was going to give, to help those in need. And I trust that happened. But I was not long in Vietnam before I discovered the profound way in which Vietnamese were teaching me the gift of hospitality, of valuing relationships above material resources and of living with some grace within the vagaries of forces beyond their control.

More recently, I have gotten involved with folks facing alcoholism and drug addiction. Surely such people need our "help." Surprise! Once again I discover that many of these folks as they work at their recovery "gift" me with powerful examples of placing first things first, of living fully in the moment and finding a good measure of serenity even when life's winds blow at gale force.

So the gifts keep flowing, certainly as much to me as from me. And I am grateful.—*Earl Martin, Harrisonburg, Va.*

EDITOR

theMennonite

The Mennonite seeks to serve the integrating Mennonite Church USA by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world.

Full-time editor needed for this weekly magazine, to begin work no later than July 2000.

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- building and nurturing constituency relationships
- being the primary editorial writer
- overseeing the work of other staff members in dispersed locations in editing, design, subscriber services, web presence, advertising sales and marketing

The successful candidate will have these characteristics:

- a strong Christian faith
- familiarity with the traditions that are forming Mennonite Church USA
- active involvement in the Mennonite faith community
- leadership gifts and management experience
- significant publications/journalism experience

Please send a letter of introduction, resume and three professional references (or your suggestions for editor candidates) by January 31, 2000, to:

Editor Search Committee
125 N. Shippen Street
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theMennonite

Scottdale, Pa. *Newton, Kan.*

Finding fulfillment

Upon reading of the death of Ben Cutrell (Jan. 4), I immediately began thinking back to our times together at the quarterly Mennonite Church Coordinating Council meetings. Ben and I would regularly eat together and ponder Mennonite Publishing House (MPH) agenda that touched on historical matters.

Ben was a publisher, keen on maintaining a Mennonite awareness for things historical—early Anabaptist as well as global Mennonite. Once, after someone had reproached him for not having published enough history, he showed me a long book list for the previous 10 years, and it was clear that our historical legacy and Mennonite identity were being well served.

But this one example is only a fraction of something far deeper, far more intricate, far more pervasive as to what actually happened during Ben Cutrell's tenure as MPH publisher: Ben helped to lead the Mennonite Church in a spiritual and intellectual transformation that is not all that obvious at first sight. Ben, with a highly gifted team, for the first time gave studied attention to the need of integrating faith and history. This took place in the Sunday school curriculum, in periodicals, in the book selections, in the church bulletins.

MPH during Ben's time was building, with brand-new determination, upon the Anabaptist vision of individuals truly following Christ, of a loving community and the way of nonviolence

theMennonite

Vol. 3, No. 4, January 25, 2000

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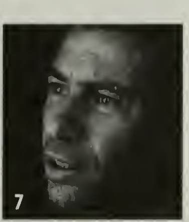
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readers say

and nonvengeance as our spiritual goal.

During this same quarter century, Ben also reached out to the General Conference Mennonite Church and other groups, entering into joint publication projects with them, in this manner also helping along the process of Christian reconciliation and integration.

Ben's door was always open. Such hints of who Ben Cutrell really was suggest something of the spiritual ministry that he said he hoped to enter at the outset of his tenure as MPH publisher. And his hopes indeed had found their fulfillment.—*Leonard Gross, Goshen, Ind.*

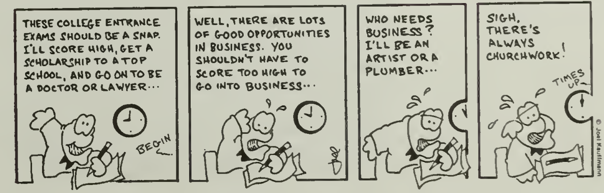
Traditional ages

It appears that some readers are unfamiliar with some of the traditions surrounding Christmas, at least judging by letters to the editor about the Dec. 21, 1999, editorial ("The Muck and the Mire"). It is true that in Christian tradition Joseph was probably 40 or 50 years of age, but Mary was brought to the temple at a very young age to be raised there. She was betrothed to Joseph at the ripe age of 14 and, before the wedding, went to live with Joseph. It was at this time that she became pregnant with Jesus, which resulted in Joseph being called to account at the temple. I leave the rest to be discovered by anyone interested in the New Testament Apocrypha.—*Phil Fuller, St. Paul, Minn.*

Cover photo
by Religious News Service

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann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Facin

Lessons from making a video about death

by Nate Barker

There she was. Cold. Laid out. Fingernails turning blue. Eyes closed in a sleep that would turn her body to dust but release her soul to eternity. "Death has an aspect of messiness to it," I had heard someone say in an interview. But for now there lay the regal, strong and upright woman I had known as Nana, turning cold as the bright July sun shone in the open window.

My lack of emotion surprised me as I stood at the foot of the bed, watching my parents weep openly. Had I not just seen my only living grandmother pass on? Her breathing low and shallow right to the end, when the rise and fall of her chest stopped in an eternal instant. Maybe it was the fact that I knew it was such a relief for her to be gone from her pain, or maybe it had been the stories I had heard in the past weeks. Stories of people not afraid of the unknown realm of death. Stories of people with faith.

We're too busy with life to worry or think about death. In fact, we try to steer clear of it, just concentrating on what's comfortable. It seems like a good plan until that comfort zone is broken into.

Over the past few months I had been sitting in living rooms, standing by porch swings, looking over homemade caskets as I conducted interviews for a video about one of the two things you can't avoid in life. And it wasn't taxes.

Working on this project didn't quite suit my taste at first. I was only 24. What did I know or care about an event I rarely thought about and considered far away?

In the cool confines of a summer basement, stacked one on top of the other like long loaves of baked bread, are two identical caskets. A 90-year-old man with a craftsman's hands stood next to his smiling son and told me the story of how "Dad just got an idea." And there lay those ideas, one on top of the other, the caskets he had made for himself and his wife. The air of the interview was surprisingly fresh, and jokes were dropping. "Now dad," said the son, "whichever one of you goes first we're just going to use the top casket. They're too heavy to dig out the bottom one."

I laughed along, wondering how this family had come to openly joke about an event that most people fear. What had these individuals found that had given them peace and freedom regarding the end of life?

We live in a society that teaches us to hang onto life as the one thing we can truly believe in. We're taught to value the body more than anything else. To diet, exercise it, walk it, keep it clean, keep it beautiful, clip it, trim it, lyposuction it, give it vitamins, feed it, keep it from aging. Surrounding us are beautiful supermodels and "life-saving" herbal remedies that create walls of false hopes. Feebly, half-heartedly we try to scale their heights, but eventually we just learn to lean against them for support.

A constant crush of advertisements, free samples and lifetime memberships make our minds spin so fast we feel we must try them all in order not to miss the one true thing that might work. So lives and money are spent in reaching for the unattainable goal of eternal youth. We think the fountain of youth may exist in a bottled drink or a diet shake, but neither really satisfies as promised by the skinny, healthy-looking model on the front of the can.

A young mother sat at a picnic table on her back porch singing "Happy 9½ to you!" to her daughter. Since her bout with breast cancer three years ago, this mother had done everything possible to celebrate life, even instituting half birthdays. Her husband and son sang along while my cameraman and I looked on with smiles. It was hard to imagine this family minus one member.

They admitted to me that three years earlier the thought of losing their mother and wife was saddening and at times scary. But now they spoke of death as if it were part of life. Death was a reality to them, a continuation of life. Facing it and surviving it had given them a peace that allowed them to hope in the future.

As young people with young families we never speak of our own deaths. It's taboo. We're too busy watching our children grow and putting together a safe and stable environment we hope they'll feel comfortable enough bringing their dates home to. We're too busy

with life to worry or think about death. In fact, we try to steer clear of it, just concentrating on what's comfortable. It seems like a good plan until that comfort zone is broken into.

Once again society has taught us to remain calm and not worry about it until it happens. But looking ahead to our own death and coming to peace with it can bring release. Knowing that our faith will sustain us and that our Lord will carry us through to his presence can give even more reasons to the young to rejoice in life.

"I trust my death … to the same God I trust my life to," said the hospice worker seated across from me. Sitting on her back patio, I looked into the eyes of a woman who had seen the joys and sorrows that had accompanied dozens of deaths. Smiling, she told me that when a person can die at home "they're much more comfortable just sitting and looking out the window at the birds in the yard or being with their family."

She told me stories of families brought together by the death of a mother or father. Families patch old wounds that have kept them separated for years. "We define healing too narrowly," she said. And I see she's right. The healing that surrounds death is much more than just the curing or death of the sick family member.

Others I spoke to while producing the video possessed that same harmony with death. The stories of peace I collected helped me. I know there are people who can look at the end of their lives and trust the Lord's grace. When my own grandmother began to slip away, I was ready for what I saw, heard and felt as I stood by her bedside in the final moments of her earthly life. I knew it wasn't an opportunity to be passed up, to be part of the celebration of a passing on, to wish someone a fond farewell as they travel to a richer, more wonderful place.

Later I decided my grandmother's story needed to be told along with the others. I drove the long eight-hour trip to my parents' home. As I traveled, I thought about the struggles and fears my parents must be going through. Caring for an aging mother, seeing her deteriorate each day, remembering the strong, independent woman she used to be.

The interviews went well as we sat and chatted about what my parents were experiencing. I saw the peace in their eyes and heard the reassurance from their voices. An occasional tear, a quick smile, many stories and memories later, we finished our talk and returned to my grandmother's bright room around 5 p.m. Cards and pictures hung on the walls and spilled over the dressers, evidence of sympathy and support that stood in silent vigil over the sleeping woman.

The stories of peace I have collected help me. I know there are people who can look at the end of their lives and trust the Lord's grace.

We talked to her, telling her it was OK to let go. We reassured her we would all be fine and she would be, too. As if to respond, she stopped breathing at 5:50 p.m. An old woman had gone home. There were tears of sadness but also of joy. Her suffering had come to an end, and my parents' relief had come at last.

Now I stood there with the voices in my head of people who had shared their peace with me, a peace that wrapped itself around us in the room where my grandmother lay. They told me she's with her Lord, in peace and comfort. Looking at her still face, I sensed their faith and hers bringing her home in peace.

Nate Barker is a freelance video producer with Mennonite Media, Harrisonburg, Va.

How I coped with my brother's murde

A journey toward forgiveness

by Art Laffin

On Sept. 20, 1999, at about 6:30 p.m., as my mother and I left my father's bedside at St. Francis hospital, where he was sick as a result of a car accident, a nurse informed us that Paul, my brother, had died several hours earlier.

Stunned, my mother and I returned to our family home, where we met my two other brothers and their wives. A friend from Paul's parish gave Paul the last rites. We soon learned that Paul was stabbed by a homeless man who frequented the homeless shelter in Hartford, Conn., where Paul worked. Dennis Soutar, a 40-year-old man who suffers from mental illness, was charged with killing Paul. We cried and prayed. After asking God for the faith to endure this horrific tragedy and giving thanks for Paul's life, somehow, through the grace of God, I found myself also praying for the man who stabbed my brother. I remembered Jesus' beatitude: "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy" (Matthew 5:7).

To be a follower of Jesus means we must live as Jesus did. Jesus calls each of us to do the works of mercy, to stand with and for the victims, to proclaim God's reign of justice and peace, and to be willing to lay down our lives rather than kill.

I still couldn't believe that my 42-year-old kid brother had been murdered. Why would anyone do such a thing? Why would this happen to Paul, who had served the poor with such compassion and love for more than 10 years? How is it possible that a man so sick is out on the streets instead of getting the care he needs? Like so many similar tragedies, this one could have been prevented if our society and government placed as their top priority meeting the needs of the afflicted and eliminating poverty.

The next morning, Paul's tragic murder was a leading news story. His picture appeared on the front page of the newspaper. Slowly it sank in that my brother was dead. I prayed for faith to go on. God's amazing grace, and the prayers and loving support of so many people, have carried me and my family through this most difficult time. The outpouring of love at Paul's funeral and subsequent memorial service at the shelter were beautiful reminders that Paul's spirit lives on in all the lives he touched.

My family and I and all who knew Paul are heartbroken over his murder. We cannot make sense of Paul's death. Where to turn but to God, our Creator and Refuge, and to Jesus, our Savior, who also died a violent death, and who forgave his murderers from the cross? Jesus calls us to live a new way. He commands us to love unconditionally, to love our enemies, to forgive 70 times seven.

I did not grow up believing in nonviolence. I never heard anything about nonviolence in church or school. As a youth and young adult, I believed in an "eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth." I fought back when somebody hit me. I believed in the American axiom of "peace through strength." But when I was introduced to nonviolence in my early 20s by Catholic pacifists and war resisters, I realized how blinded I had been by the culture of violence and war. My world was turned upside down. After reading about and praying over the teachings of Jesus, learning about the rich history of nonviolence from biblical times to the present and meeting many peacemakers, I knew that to follow Jesus meant adopting a nonviolent ethic.

The call to follow the way of nonviolence has not been easy for me. I am constantly aware of my shortcomings. As I have tried to follow the nonviolent Jesus, I have been led to live in community, work with the poor, be imprisoned for acts of peacemaking and stand with victims in war zones, calling for peace. I have faced life-threatening situations, including being assaulted. I give thanks to God for seeing my through many difficult moments. Daily I pray for the strength to become a nonviolent person.

Jesus' call to nonviolence is radical and total. It means we must uphold the sacredness of all life and protect the earth. It means we must not only refuse to commit or support acts of violence or killing but also actively resist all state-sanctioned killing. It means abolishing all

weapons and outlawing war. It means establishing justice for the oppressed and canceling Third World debt. It means resolving conflict through nonviolent means. It means confronting and exposing violence and evil with the power of truth and nonviolent love. It means helping people who commit violent acts take responsibility for what they have done and help heal and restore them rather than be vengeful toward them.

Jesus calls us to be people of mercy and forgiveness. Thus, in my eulogy at Paul's funeral, I asked that, as hard as it may seem, we must do as Jesus would do and show compassion and mercy toward Dennis Soutar. I also made an appeal that he and others like him receive the help they need so that they will no longer be a threat to others or themselves. In a media interview, my mother said: "We have no ill feelings toward him. We are praying as the Lord taught us: 'Forgive him because he didn't know what he did.'"

As I cope with the murder of my brother, I am more acutely aware of the pain and suffering experienced by other families who have had loved ones murdered. I am especially strengthened by the witness of Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation. This group, which I've had the privilege to pray and fast with at the U.S. Supreme Court over the last several years, is comprised of people who have had family members killed and have sought to reconcile with the person who murdered their loved one. They also actively campaign for the abolition of the death penalty. I pray for the strength to be able to follow their healing, life-giving example.

To be a follower of Jesus means we must live as Jesus did. Jesus calls each of us to do the works of mercy, to stand with and for the victims, to proclaim God's reign of justice and peace and to be willing to lay down our lives rather than kill. My brother Paul's ministry was grounded in his faith. Paul was not perfect. He was an ordinary person who, despite his weaknesses, did his best to be faithful to Jesus. With passion and great dedication, Paul helped the hungry and homeless poor and those suffering with AIDS, without counting the cost. In the midst of everything he faced, Paul maintained a great sense of humor that lifted peoples' spirits. The legacy Paul leaves us is a life of love and service. I find consolation in knowing that Paul died living out the gospel.

Paul's tragic death is a powerful reminder of how short, precious and fragile life is. Life is a miracle and a gift we must never take for granted. We do not know when or how we will die. The best way to prepare ourselves for our final homecoming with God is to live fully now. As we confront death, let us remember that although Jesus was murdered on the cross, he rose from the dead and has forever overcome death. Let us pray for the faith and courage we need daily to do God's will and become channels of God's love, mercy and reconciliation.

Art Laffin lives in Hartford, Conn. A version of this article originally appeared in the newsletter of the Hartford Catholic Worker.

The call to follow the way of nonviolence has not been easy for me. As I have tried to follow the nonviolent Jesus, I have been led to live in community, work with the poor, be imprisoned for acts of peacemaking and stand with victims in war zones, calling for peace. Daily I pray for the strength to become a nonviolent person.

MBM workers caught in Ivory Coast coup

Christmas plans disrupted, but everyone reported safe

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast—Mennonite Board of Missions workers in West Africa continue to feel the aftershocks of a military coup that began in Abidjan on Dec. 24, 1999. None of the eight MBM workers in Ivory Coast and neighboring Benin or their children was injured, but military personnel commandeered the car belonging to one MBM worker.

"The situation has settled down a lot," says Steve Wiebe-Johnson, MBM administrative coordinator for West Africa and an MBM worker in Abidjan. "The airport is open again, and the roads are relatively free of military [personnel]."

Police in military uniforms have stopped the Wiebe-Johnson family—Steve, his wife, Dorothy, and their two sons—several times for questioning. The national television and radio stations remain under military control, and occasional gunfire can still be heard in the city.

MBM Ivory Coast worker Annelise Goldschmidt had her car commandeered Dec. 24 at a military checkpoint. She received word Jan. 7 that the car had been found, but the key still needs to be identified from a large box with keys from all the commandeered vehicles.

The Wiebe-Johnsons, who previously worked in Benin, had planned to host the MBM Benin team for Christmas. Christine and Philip Lindell Detweiler and their three children and Rachel Kauffman arrived from Benin on Dec. 23 before the borders closed. Lynda and Rodney Hollinger-Janzen were turned away when they reached the Ivory Coast border the next day.

The group of 10 spent the next three days in the Wiebe-Johnson home, waiting for order to be restored. The Detweilers and Kauffman remained in Abidjan until country borders reopened Jan. 1.

The military instituted a dusk-to-dawn curfew, threatening to shoot anyone seen outdoors after 6 p.m. During daytime hours, soldiers patrolled city streets and fired shots into the air. Officials cautioned Europeans and North Americans in Ivory Coast to stay at home behind locked doors.

"We did try to make the best of it," Dorothy Wiebe-Johnson says. "I guess it was kind of like being snowed in but with a lot more tension."

The coup began Dec. 24, following a day of protests by soldiers. "The protests by the soldiers were not designed to be the beginning of a takeover," Dorothy says. "There has been a lot of discontent for a long time within the military and the former president's administration.

"The protests of the soldiers dovetailed with the upset among the government administration, which built up to a move to overthrow [former President Henri Konan] Bedie. It all happened quickly and without bloodshed."

Bedie tried to hang on, but when he called for his supporters to rally, no one responded, Steve says.

"We are thankful that there was no resistance and that the French military didn't get involved," Dorothy says.

The MBM workers recognize, however, that the situation is not over. "There are some serious financial problems to resolve … so we will have to see what happens," Steve says. "We are not yet out of the woods."—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

Goshen cancels SST following takeover

GOSHEN, Ind.—Instability in the Ivory Coast following the Dec. 24, 1999, coup has prompted Goshen College to cancel this summer's three-month Study-Service Term (SST) in the country.

"We have been advised by trusted people on site … that it would be unwise for us to come there for SST this year," Wilbur Birky, Goshen director of international education, said in a statement. "Their judgment is that … the country is deeply divided and that there is the potential for considerable risk."

Birky said he hopes Goshen can return to the Ivory Coast, an SST destination since 1993. In the meantime, college officials are searching for an alternative French-speaking site. Goshen has five other SST locations around the globe.—*Rich Preheim*

Tanzania doctor dives into new year

Esther Kawira learned how to swim as a child but had never attempted a long-distance swim. But she thought a new year would be a good time to try.

So on New Year's Day, Kawira, an Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) worker in Shirati, Tanzania, swam three hours across the mouth of Lake Victoria's Shirati Bay.

"I wanted to do something auspicious on Jan. 1, 2000, that would involve the lake and that my children would always remember," says Kawira. A native of Goshen, Ind ., she has served for the past 16 years as a doctor at Shirati Hospital, which is owned and operated by the Tanzania Mennonite Church.

Lake Victoria, the second largest freshwater lake in the world, lies on the equator, bordering Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.—*EMM News Service*

In remote Nepali mountain villages, MCC nurse helps create medical miracles

AKRON, Pa.—Every year stunning snow-capped mountains and the promise of adventure lure backpacking tourists to Nepal. Ruth McCaslin has had a few adventures of her own.

Such as the time the driver of the four-wheel-drive vehicle she was riding in swerved to avoid a huge mud hole. For several heart-stopping seconds, the vehicle skittered on the cliff edge, finally halting with one front wheel suspended in mid-air, the valley floor hundreds of feet below. The passengers scrambled to safety, then got the vehicle back onto the dirt track, and they continued on their way.

But McCaslin is not a tourist. She is a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) nurse based in Pokhra, Nepal. About 10 times a year she travels with International Nepal Fellowship medical teams to provide surgeries for poor, desperately sick people in remote villages.

The teams pack medicines and surgical instruments, drums for water and a generator, as most mountain villages don't have running water or electricity. After hours of driving and then walking when the roads become impassable for vehicles, the teams arrive to find lines of people already waiting for what might be their once-in-a-lifetime chance for an operation. For many villagers, the nearest surgical facility would be an impossible two- to three-week walk away.

"I feel grateful that I can be part of the solution," says McCaslin, who is currently on home leave with her husband, Walt, in Saskatoon. "People are so grateful."

She cites a 10-year-old deaf boy who received surgery on one ear last January. Ten months later, he had recovered some hearing, started to attend school and learned to read and write.

Doctors and surgeons on the teams are usually from Europe and North America, giving up vacation time to serve in Nepal for several weeks. They often can't believe how sick the Nepali villagers are "while continuing to walk around and live their lives" McCaslin says.

Before patients are seen, she and her co-workers prepare a sterile space. Sometimes villages designate a school or the local clinic, which McCaslin helps spray with formaldehyde, keeping windows and doors closed. She sterilizes instruments in the pressure cooker they have brought, and something is found to serve as an operating table. Then from morning to night the team operates, usually performing 40 to 80 procedures in five to seven days and seeing 500 to 1,000 patients.

McCaslin has learned to expect the unexpected as word spreads that medical help is available. At the end of one ear-surgery camp a woman showed up, her hand black with gangrene. A week and a half earlier, a wall had fallen on the woman's hand. Her bangle bracelet cut through the flesh, down to the bone. Although the medical team consisted of ear specialists, they knew the woman would die if her hand was not amputated. That night they pored over texts, surveyed and rejected their fine ear-surgery instruments, and finally located a hacksaw, which they sterilized in the fire. Their ear camp ended with a limb amputation.
—Pearl Sensenig of MCC News Service

I feel that I can be part of the solution. People are so grateful.

—Ruth McCaslin

Larry Bartel

New room with a view

Hesston (Kan.) College student Kendra King, a freshman from Hutchinson, Kan., unpacks plants as she moves into her new room in Erb Hall's east wing overlooking the campus. About 90 students moved into the recently renovated section on Jan. 10. The rooms include computer-network access, new modular furniture and room-by-room climate control.

MBM retirement plan now fully funded

ELKHART, Ind.—After helping people around the world prepare for a future with God, Mennonite Board of Missions overseas workers can look to their own future with confidence. And MBM can look forward to additional funds for its program.

After 17 years of concentrated effort, MBM's retirement plan has reached full funding as determined by actuarial studies. In 1982, after years of paying retirement benefits out of its operating budget, MBM started a retirement fund with Mennonite Foundation. Until it reached full funding last year, money for the fund had come from MBM's operating budget and from contributions.

Reaching full funding frees $300,000 annually for MBM to use elsewhere. About $40,000 a year came from some dozen congregations and five individuals who had been making contributions to the fund earmarked for specific former workers.

"The continuing support developed out of loyalty to the work for which these people devoted their lives," says Dean Heisey, MBM alumni director. "Some of the retired workers, who've been retired for 15 to 20 years, still have a continuing relationship with the congregation or individual."

Retirement benefits are dependent on the number of years of service with MBM. Full benefits are given for 25 years or more. Currently 24 couples and 37 individuals receive retirement benefits from MBM's retirement plan.—*MBM News Service with Rich Preheim*

Grants allow R and R for Indiana pastors

Three Indiana-Michigan Conference pastors are among 23 Indiana clergy who will get a break from pastoral duties, thanks to a new endowment program.

The Indiana-based Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program provides grants of as much as $30,000 for pastors to take a period of R and R: renewal and reflection. Two-thirds of the grant may be used to fund the pastor's renewal program, one third may be used by the congregation to fill pastoral responsibilities during the pastor's absence.

Among the grant recipients are:

- Dagne Assefa of Shalom Mennonite Church, Indianapolis, for seminary studies, for establishing a partnership with the Meserete Kristos Church (the Mennonite church in Ethiopia) and for helping the congregation combat racism.
- Ron Diener of Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen, for visiting churches and people in Bolivia, where he and his wife served before arriving at Pleasant View.
- Richard A. Litwiller of Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, Goshen, for retreat and study at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.—*Gospel Evangel*

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Fifth Mennonite Arts Weekend set for Feb. 4-6

CINCINNATI—Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship will host the fifth Mennonite Arts Weekend Feb. 4-6, featuring jazz, comedy, music and visual arts.

Scheduled participants are Mary Mitchell Trejo, Native American clay sculptor; Marilyn Houser Hamm, musician; David Wright, poet; Barbara Fast, paper artist; Barbra Graber, theater artist; Shirley Shenk, quilt designer; Gene Wiggins, Native American storyteller; Ted Swartz and Lee Eshleman, comedic actors; Esther Augsburger, sculptor; and J. Harold Moyer, composer and the weekend's "honored sage." Performances will be given by Bluffton (Ohio) College's Camerata Singers and Jazz Ensemble.

Goshen College honored for race efforts

GOSHEN, Ind.—On Jan. 17, a day set aside for honoring Martin Luther King Jr. and his work for racial harmony, Goshen College was announced by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities as this year's recipient of the Racial Harmony Award. Goshen President Shirley H. Showalter and Zenebe Abebe, vice president for multicultural education, will receive the award Feb. 1 in Washington.

Among the reasons cited for Goshen's selection for the award were its multicultural education office, its strategic plan to serve a diverse population, diversity awards from the Indiana Civil Rights Commission and an all-campus Martin Luther King Jr. study day.

New Canadian college acquires campus

WINNIPEG—Canada's newest Mennonite post-secondary school has taken possession of a central piece of its future campus in Winnipeg and started work preparing it for students in September.

Mennonite College Federation—made up of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Menno Simons College, all located in Winnipeg—on Jan. 16 became owners of the former Manitoba School for the Deaf, located across the street from CMBC. The two properties will form the MCF campus.

Work on the 77-year-old school for the deaf facility will include refurbishing of classrooms, chapel, gymnasium, student commons and offices. On the CMBC campus, a new residence hall will be built and the library enlarged.

MCF was formed in 1998 and started offering classes last fall.

Former Ghana missionary worker dies at age 78

ELKHART, Ind.—Erma Grove, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) worker and theological educator in Ghana for 28 years, died Dec. 21, 1999, in Elkhart at the age of 78.

Grove was one of the first Mennonite workers in Ghana, arriving in 1957. She served 10 years as director of the Good News Training Institute in Accra, the only interdenominational institution of higher learning for the 2 million to 3 million members of African Independent Churches in the country. The school hopes to build a women's dormitory in honor of Grove.

Her mission work also included teaching in Ethiopia (1949-1951) and Culp, Ark. (1953-1957).

Memorial services were held at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., on Dec. 23 and at Cedar Grove Mennonite Church, Greencastle, Pa., on Dec. 24.—*MBM News Service*

GC pastor, school leader dies at age 86

ELBING, Kan.—Harold D. Burkholder, General Conference Mennonite Church pastor and a driving force behind Grace Bible Institute (now Grace University) in Omaha, Neb., died Jan. 15. He was 86.

Burkholder, a native of Beaverdam, Ohio, pastored congregations in Pennsylvania, California, Oregon, Nebraska, Ohio and Kansas. He was one of Grace's founders and held the positions of professor, dean of men and president, serving from 1949 to 1955 and from 1960 to 1975.

He was buried in the Emmaus Mennonite Church cemetery, Whitewater, Kan.

by the way ...

The first Mennonite congregation in Australia was organized in 1979.—*An Introduction to Mennonite History* by C.J. Dyck

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Births

Alderfer, Evan Mark, Dec. 8, to Denise (Cassel) and Mark Alderfer, Telford, Pa.

Caffrey, Jaron Paul, Dec. 19, to Paul and Tami (Yoder) Caffrey, Mount Hope, Kan.

Chizum, Kelsey Ann, Dec. 8, to Gary and Jennifer (Hostetler) Chizum, Middlebury, Ind.

Coblentz, Cassandra Novelle, Dec. 29, to Matthew and Stephanie (Mast) Coblentz, Hartville, Ohio.

Gerdon, Karissa Joy, Dec. 10, to David and Kristi (Widrick) Gerdon, Castorland, N.Y.

Graber, Natalie Kate, Jan. 5, to Corbin and Tonya (Gundy) Graber, Cassopolis, Mich.

Green, Christian Jacob, Dec. 30, to Bill and Jessica (Zehr) Green, Elbridge, N.Y.

Hetrick, Colby James, Jan. 1, to Kelly (Mechler) and Michael Hetrick, Macungie, Pa.

Hostetler, Noelle Jane, Dec. 14, to Crista (Wittmer) and Jesse Hostetler, Hartville, Ohio.

Kauffman, Christian Roy, Dec. 15, to Crystal (Bontrager) and Trent Kauffman, Middlebury, Ind.

Mann, Greta Elizabeth, Nov. 16, to Carrie (Heldt) and Mark Mann, Evansville, Ind.

Miller, Alexander Jacob, Dec. 8, to Daryl and Jennie Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Neer, Laura Ashley, Dec. 27, to Stephen and Surena (Evans) Neer, West Liberty, Ohio.

Olsen, Nicholas Alan, Jan. 6, to Dennis and Mia (Sommers) Olsen, Harrisonburg, Va.

Rieder, Sara, Dec. 26, to David and Mildred (Freeman) Rieder, Waterloo, Ont.

Riley, Corinna Sue, Jan. 3, to Buffy (Wyse) and Jaycee Riley, Archbold, Ohio.

Shelly, Marget Sophia, Dec. 27, to Karen (Gagliardino) and Lucas Shelly, Quakertown, Pa.

Siebert, Alexa Marie, Nov. 22, to Danielle (Mierau) and Matthew Siebert, Henderson, Neb.

Womack, Rebecca Joy, Dec. 1, to John and Kristin (Duerksen) Womack, Coralville, Iowa.

Yoder, Conrad Warren, Dec. 20, to Anita (Miller) and Randi Yoder, Middlebury, Ind.

Marriages

Bontrager/Murphy: Mahlon Bontrager, Hutchinson, Kan., and Connie Murphy, Hutchinson, Jan. 1 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

Burd/Eberspacher: Aaron Burd, Pleasant Dale, Neb., and Jamie Eberspacher, Milford, Neb., Dec. 21 at Pleasant Dale United Methodist Church.

Dueck/Mellinger: Jon Dueck, Goshen, Ind., and Celia Mellinger, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 28 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

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Marlene Kropf, D.Min., AMBS
June Alliman Yoder, D. Min., AMBS
May 30-June 9

Congregational Administration and Leadership: Models of Blessing and Empowerment
Del Glick, D.Min., guest instructor
May 30-June 9

Conflict, Communication, Conciliation
John Paul Lederach, Ph.D., AMBS Adjunct
June 1-7

Epic Prophecy: Joshua-Kings
James E. Brenneman, Ph.D., guest instructor
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Jesus the Teacher
Daniel Schipani, Ph.D., AMBS
June 12-23

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Graybill/Harnish: John Graybill, Lititz, Pa., and Elizabeth Harnish, Lititz, Jan. 8 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Longenecker/Nolt: Anita Longenecker, Lewisburg, Pa., and Brendon Nolt, Elizabethtown, Pa., Dec. 30 at Buffalo Mennonite Church, Lewisburg.

Deaths

Amstutz, Clela, 85, Pandora, Ohio, died Nov. 22 of cancer. Survivors: children James, David, Jeanne Hall, Doneta Miller, Twila Sanford, Marjorie Meilcahy; 18 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 4 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Baer, Catherine Witmer, 88, Maugansville, Md., died Dec. 25 of heart failure. Spouse: Melvin Baer (deceased). Parents: Phares and Lydia Martin Witmer (deceased). Survivors: children Lorraine Reid, Isabelle Fox, Donald; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at Cedar Grove Mennonite Church, Greencastle, Pa.

Basinger, Gaynell, 85, Bluffton, Ohio, died Jan. 3. Parents: Jeremiah and Anna Diller Basinger (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 6 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Dennis, Lois Francis Blasi, 89, Pulaski, Iowa, died Dec. 29 of a stroke. Survivors: children Charles, Edward, Francis, Darlene Reihman. Funeral: Jan. 4 at Pulaski Mennonite Church.

Gehman, Abraham Bergey, 89, Barto, Pa., died Jan. 3. Spouse: Mary Kulp Gehman. Other survivors: children Linford, Abraham, James, Merrill, Ronald, Harley, Dwight, Rhoda, Johanna, Ada; 15 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan 8 at Bally (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hofstetter, Corinne, 69, Euclid, Ohio, died Dec. 24 of cancer. Parents: Martha (deceased) and Sylvan Hofstetter. Funeral: Dec. 28 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Lehman, Ruth Speigle, 91, Bridgeville, Del., died Dec. 23. Spouse: John Lehman (deceased). Parents: John and Laura Gashaw Speigle (deceased). Survivors: children John, Anna Hand, Hannah Pusey, Paul; 12 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Blough Mennonite Church, Hollsopple, Pa.

Miller, Lizzie Ann Christner, 82, Goshen, Ind., died Dec. 22. Spouse: Valentine Miller (deceased). Parents: Levi and Goldie O'Neil Christner (deceased). Survivors: children Goldie Yoder, Sarah, Arthur, Verlin, Raymond. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Piper, Gretchen Marie, 17, Iowa City, Iowa, died Dec. 15 in an auto accident. Parents: Jim and Mary Piper. Funeral: Dec. 19 at First Mennonite Church of Iowa City.

Roth, Ida, 90, Kalona, Iowa, died Dec. 13. Funeral: Dec. 13 at Kalona.

Schrag, Lawrence, 83, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died Dec. 31. Spouse: (1st) Cora Schwartz Schrag (deceased); (2nd) Ruby Stucky Schrag. Parents: Chris and Martha Graber Schrag (deceased). Other survivors: children Marilyn Vogt, Geri Allcorn; stepsons Gary, Steve, Dave, Gordon Stucky; five grandchildren; nine stepgrandchildren; five great-grandchildren; three stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 4 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie.

Schrock, Esther, 83, Eureka, Ill., died Dec. 17. Parents: Joel and Laura Garber Schrock (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 20 at Metamora, Ill.

Shore, James Edward, 63, Harleysville, Pa., died Dec. 7. Spouse: Diane Carol Shore. Other survivors: children Tobin, Debora Rakowski; four grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 10 at Salford (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Troyer, Lizzie Yoder, 90, Hutchinson, Kan., died Jan. 7 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Ora Troyer. Parents: Jacob and Anna Miller Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Lowell, Larry Kline; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 10 at Yoder (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

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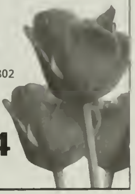

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classifieds

- **Clinton Frame Mennonite Church** has ***used church pews*** for sale, seating capacity around 450, in lengths of 12, 14½ and 18 feet; blond wood with padded seats. Interested people may contact Duane Stutzman, 219-642-3231; email duanes@skyenet.net

- **Rosslyn Academy**, K-12 fully accredited school in ***Nairobi, Kenya***, is searching for qualified, dedicated staff for the 2000-2001 school year. Positions open: kindergarten, 5th, middle-school English, middle-school science, technology, computer, librarian, PE.
  Contact Dena Brent, Box 14146, Nairobi, Kenya; email rosslyn@maf.org

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., seeks ***summer staff—June 18-Aug. 11, 2000:*** counselors, assistant program director, cook, assistant cook, kitchen and maintenance workers, nurse and lifeguard.
  More information: 2610 Lynds Hill Rd., Plymouth, VT 05056; 802-672-3959; email bbc@valley.net

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of the Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has an opening for a ***couple*** for a long-term voluntary service assignment. For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email igh-dc@juno.com

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa. (200 students, K-8) is searching for a qualified ***administrator/principal*** beginning June 1, 2000. Candidates shall have the necessary educational credentials and share our commitment to Christian education based on Christian principles from the Anabaptist perspective. WFCS is in its 59th year and is affiliated with the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.
  Send resume to WFCS, Attn. Search Committee, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310.

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- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** is seeking a ***director of social services***. This full-time position requires a minimum of a BSW and basic computer skills. Desire person experienced in geriatrics in a supervisory capacity. Experience or interest in people with memory impairment helpful.

  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543; 717-581-3936.

- **Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute** invites applications for the position of ***principal*** to begin July 2000. MBCI has a student body of 560 (grade 7 to senior IV) and a professional staff of 40 teachers.

  Address inquiries and applications by Feb. 29 to Search Committee, 180 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E8; 204-667-8210; fax 204-661-5091; email mbcis@mbnet.mb.ca

- **Mennonite Voluntary Service unit** of Topeka, Kan., needs a ***compact pickup truck*** for work with urban gardens in low-income and culturally diverse neighborhoods. Mechanically sound, reliable vehicle desired to haul compost, small tiller, various other garden tools and supplies to community gardens, and to provide local transportation for MVSers. Will travel to retrieve, if necessary. Call Southern Hills Mennonite Church, 785-266-9403.

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, Reinholds, Pa., seeks a full-time ***youth/associate pastor***. Youth work and preaching experience a plus; should have general agreement with Anabaptist teachings and a strong evangelically-based faith commitment. Inquiries/resumes to Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 341, Reinholds, PA 17569; 717-336-6130; email emmanuelmc@desupernet.net

- **Wanted: *Energetic person*** needed to give vision for development and funding of the newly forming Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. This full-time executive position will be located in Elkhart, Ind. Key qualifications include commitment to Mennonite beliefs and practice and an active member of the church; bachelor's degree in marketing or business; at least three years experience in a related field; proven communication skills. Applicants for this position should be able to make quick transitions, be well acquainted with the church and be eager to be part of the transformation of the new Mennonite Church USA. Women and people of color are especially encouraged to apply.

  Send resumes and inquiries to George Stoltzfus, general secretary, Mennonite Church USA, 421 S. 2nd St. Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516; geobs@juno.com

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by Gordon Houser

No one knows what Jesus looked like. Yet through the centuries, artists have portrayed Jesus in a variety of images that reflect their time.

In his seminal book *Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture* (Yale University Press, 1985), Jaroslav Pelikan looks at 18 images of Jesus throughout history, from "the rabbi" to "the bridegroom of the soul" to "the man who belongs to the world." He writes that "the way any particular age has depicted Jesus is often a key to the genius of that age."

As Christianity has spread throughout various cultures, images of Jesus have arisen to reflect those cultures. Today you'll find portrayals of Jesus as African, Chinese, Indian, Mexican. And we're all familiar with the blond, blue-eyed Jesus so prominent in English Bibles a generation ago.

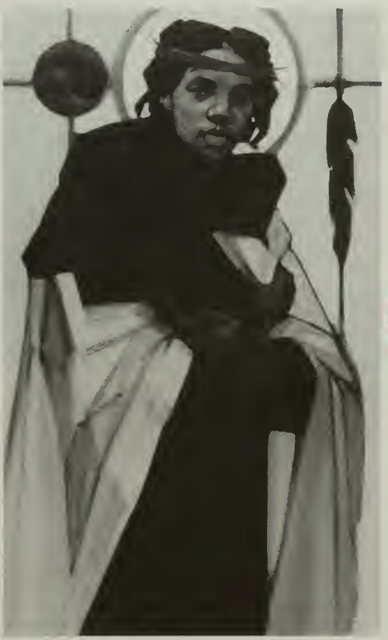
Pelikan writes, "The universality-with-particularity of Jesus has … become an issue not only for Christians in the 20th century but for humanity." The influence of the man from Nazareth goes far beyond church members.

This became clear when *National Catholic Reporter* (*NCR*) sponsored a contest to create an image of Jesus. The paper asked Sister Wendy Beckett, the famed BBC art expert, to judge the final 10 entries.

The contest, called "Jesus 2000," received 1,678 representations of Jesus from 1,004 artists in 19 countries. That's an overwhelming response. And the contest caught the attention of the larger, secular media. *NCR* editor Michael J. Farrell appeared on talk shows, and newspapers and magazines reported the contest and the final results.

The winning entry (see below) is "Jesus of the People" by Janet McKenzie of Island Pond, Vt. She writes that the painting "simply came through me. … Jesus stands holding his robes, one hand near his heart, and looks at us—and to us. He is flanked by three symbols, the yin-yang symbol representing perfect balance, the halo conveying Jesus' holiness and the feather symbolizing transcendent knowledge. The feather also refers to the Native American and the Great Spirit. The feminine aspect is served by the fact that although Jesus was designed as a man with a masculine presence, the model was in fact a woman. The essence of the work is simply that Jesus is all of us. … I would like to think 'Jesus of the People' might contribute in a small way to reminding us of love."

Artists have always been attracted to the figure of Jesus. And Christians have long used such images to aid them in their faith.



The best of 1999

Here, in alphabetical order, are the top five books I read and films I saw in the last year. I limited the films to those 1999 releases that have come to a theater or video store nearby.

Books

- *Disgraced: A Novel* by J.M. Coetzee
- *Everything Belongs* by Richard Rohr
- *Jesus of Nazareth: Millenarian Prophet* by Dale C. Allison
- *Kaaterskill Falls: A Novel* by Allegra Goodman
- *Saint Paul Returns to the Movies: Triumph Over Shame* by Robert Jewett

Films

- *American Beauty*
- *The Dreamlife of Angels*
- *The Insider*
- *Toy Story 2*
- *The Winslow Boy*

films

Three recently released films have garnerd much attention. While each is well-made by a noteworthy director and includes outstanding acting performances, none appears on my best-of-the-year list (see below left).

Man on the Moon (R) depicts the avant-garde and controversial performer Andy Kaufman (Jim Carrey). The film is fairly straightforward about Kaufman's antics, offering no simple explanation of his behavior.

The Talented Mr. Ripley (R) is based on Patricia Highsmith's novel but tries to soften the book's harshness by offering for the main character's actions psychological motivations that confuse rather than clarify the plot.

Magnolia (R) is creatively filmed, but most of its troubled characters (and their language) are boringly similar. While it tries to address universal themes, its coy, self-referential tone undercuts its power to move viewers.

videos

Two recent releases offer nonviolent lessons as well as entertainment.

The Iron Giant (PG) is a delightful animated film that aptly criticizes weapons used to kill.

Tea With Mussolini (PG) is based on a true story of British and American women who oppose Italy's fascism in World War II.

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Rich Preheim

An epidemic of abandonment

It's the basic existential inquiry: Why are we here? Believers can find their answers in the biblical injunctions to share Christ's healing and hope with the world. But gather those believers into congregations, and, disturbingly, the answers seem to become forgotten.

Those allegations are not new. Congregations have long been charged with being too self-centered and missing opportunities to minister beyond themselves. But two studies in the past year indicate that our denomination has trouble even continuing what we have been doing and traditionally emphasized.

A Mennonite Central Committee survey found that only 21 percent of its workers feel their home congregations are supportive of them in their MCC work. (While the survey did not identify respondents by church affiliation, the merging General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church cannot escape the implications, since 45 percent of MCC workers are GC, MC, dual-conference or Mennonite Church Canada members.)

While we are failing to do our part for those people meeting physical needs, we are also coming up short in calling gifted individuals to address spiritual needs. In another survey, only 30 percent of GC, MC and Mennonite Church Canada high school youth felt their congregations were encouraging teenagers to consider the pastorate as a vocation. The survey also found that only 44 percent of Ministerial Inquiry Program participants and ministerial students at denominational schools reported that congregational leaders intentionally encourage people to become pastors.

Fortunately, God can and does work in ways apart from the congregation. In fact, that seems to be the case now.

The study was sponsored by Mennonite Board of Education and the ministerial leadership offices of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries and Mennonite Church Canada.

Considered separately, the MCC and the pastorate studies perhaps could each be explained away. But examine them together, and they suggest an epidemic of congregations relinquishing their God-given responsibilities to advance the kingdom. If the numbers are to be believed, too many congregations are abandoning too many members wanting to pursue various forms of ministry, leaving them to discern and pursue those callings on their own or to seek out other avenues of support. Or worse yet, they miss or ignore those callings.

As the most immediate assembly of discerning believers, the congregation is the structural foundation of the body of Christ. The congregation is where people regularly gather for worship, instruction, nurture and fellowship. But the congregation is not meant to be a self-serving entity. Rather, its purpose is to serve God and others. A congregation's activities—worship services, Bible studies, board meetings, recreation—are meant to equip its members for that service in a variety of ways.

Of course, not everyone is called to the pulpit or an overseas assignment. And everyone can witness in their own contexts. But for those individuals who feel they are called to ministry vocations, the congregation plays several crucial roles. It needs to help identify and encourage individuals whom God has provided with particular gifts, then provide ways for exploring the call and testing those gifts. Finally, if the call is affirmed, the congregation needs to bless and send the individual and to provide support: prayer, emotional, even financial.

The overwhelming absence of calling and supporting implies that congregations are too focused on themselves. Inward focus is good and necessary, but it cannot be at the expense of the church's mission to all nations. That turns congregations only into exclusive clubs.

Fortunately, God can and does work in ways apart from congregations. In fact, that seems to be the case now; the majority of MCC workers and would-be pastors are trying to faithfully follow God's call despite feeling abandoned.

There are a myriad of theories for all this. And they need to be addressed if we are going to capitalize on our potential as a new denomination. But the upshot is that our congregations are increasingly ceasing to send and support workers. That misses the point of why congregations are here.—*rp*

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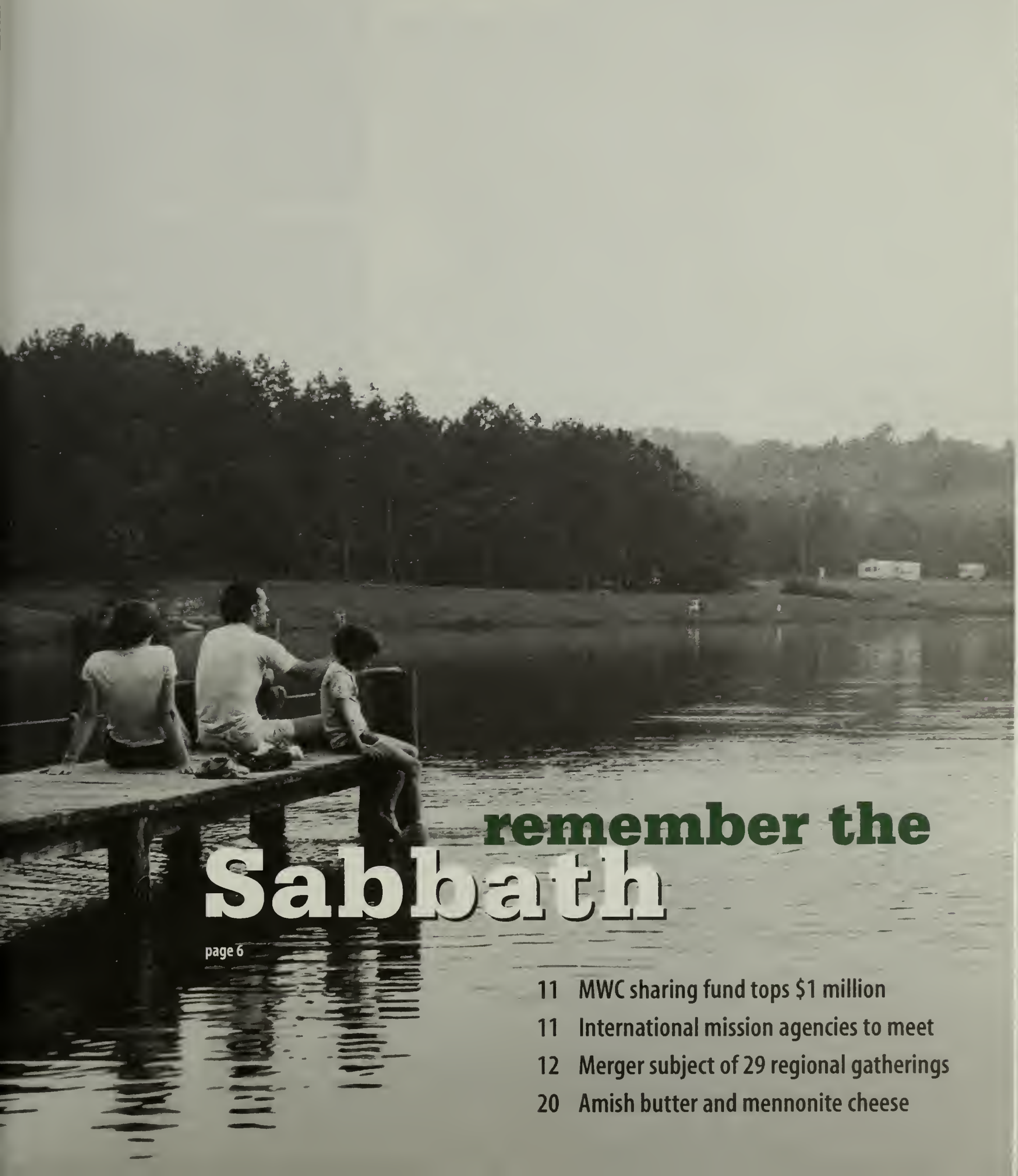

remember the Sabbath

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The new year of the Lord

Against all the hustle, bustle, doom and gloom in ushering in the new millennium, my first waking thoughts on Jan. 1, A.D. 2000, were of delight and surprise by a gift so unmistakably given me.

In the weeks and months leading up to Y2K, unnamed forces had effectively co-opted news providers into pitching two seemingly opposite outcomes. The one was nearly unattainable: to not be caught missing out on the most memorable moment of a lifetime. The other was nearly unavoidable: an almost endless array of potential Y2K computer-initiated disasters.

The source of my waking pleasure came with a frank realization that this was Jan. 1, A.D. 2000, "anno Domini," Latin for "in the year of the Lord." That's it! No more! And certainly no less! Christ's life, death and resurrection initiated an event so central in our history as to have become the baseline for our reckoning of time.

In light of all the millennium hype, I became upset with our conference and spiritual leaders for not having taken steps to provide and reintroduce an alternative witness of spiritual hopes and fears surrounding Y2K. I felt exempted, I reasoned, for I had busied myself in raising an alternative voice in my local economic and political world, and our spiritual leaders had a responsibility to do the same regarding the spiritual.

Eventually, without dismissing their responsibilities, self-justification gave way to recognizing that I, like all other disciples, have a responsibility to think globally and act locally in all of my environments. Consequently, I will take some steps, even if small, and begin to reclaim part of our rightful heritage by reintroducing A.D. to date references. Whether or not the next millennium begins next year, together we can further prepare the way by proclaiming it and succeeding years as "anno Domini."
—Eduard Hiebert, St. Francis Xavier, Man.

Litmus tests

A recent letter decried the employment of issues such as homosexuality as litmus tests for church members. I disagree.

We seem to have two models for the Christian faith. The first is the "jigsaw puzzle" model. Some people seem to subscribe to this model. Many pieces can be missing from a jigsaw puzzle, but we can still be pretty sure of the picture. Some people may have found pieces that we did not find, and their contribution can make the picture even clearer. And if a piece or two is removed, the picture is still distinct enough for all to agree on what it portrays. The substitutionary death of Christ, the total trustworthiness of the written Word, the issue of homosexuality—these may all be in question, but the general picture is unchanged.

The second model is the "living organism." In this model, the absence, malformation or disease of one part is a signal and threat to the whole organism. If one organ is seriously diseased, the whole organism is in danger. A litmus test is a type of chemical test that detects the presence or absence of certain substances. A chemical test is very helpful, for it can indicate that serious trouble lies ahead for the organism. If we know that pastors or college teachers or writers of church educational materials challenge, say, the total trustworthiness of the Bible or the Bible's condemnation of homosexual activity, we can be sure that the organism of the Christian faith is seriously diseased. We are also less likely to welcome the diversity of views that are toxic or lethal to the Christian faith. I believe the "living organism" model is more realistic, so I welcome an occasional litmus test.*—Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

Double diamonds

Kudos to *The Mennonite,* Wilbert Shenk and Tim Lind for the Jan. 4 issue. It is a rare privilege to read not one but two in-depth, insightful and provocative essays in the same magazine. "Mission Past, Mission Future" and "Gift Sharing in the Global Church" both challenged me personally to think seriously about how I and my local congregation are doing missions in our neck of the woods. Keep up the good work, and soon we will expect several diamonds in the rough each week.*—Kent Davis Sensenig, Cedar Falls, Iowa*

Hear the angel chorus

Have you ever had the role of being chief angel in the church children's Christmas program? Now, more than ever, the United States needs to hear each Mennonite church member (and others) pronouncing peace on earth with all the conviction and joy of God-sent angels.

The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty has been signed by 152 nations and bans any nuclear weapon test explosions and establishes an international monitoring system to ensure that signatories observe the treaty. Many countries have ratified it while others wait for the United States to commit itself to cease testing and thereby end nuclear weapons develop-

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite,* P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.*—Editors*

theMennonite

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

ment. Already having the dubious distinction of being the world leader in number and killing power of nuclear weapons, the United States should be the first to want to freeze the development of such weapons worldwide. But it did the exact opposite: On Oct. 13, 1999, the U.S. Senate voted 51 to 48 to reject the treaty. Now so-called "rogue countries," potential nuclear powers themselves, will feel more than justified in building more weapons.

Does faith in nuclear weapons testing befit a "Christian" nation? Even "atheist" Communist China shines brighter by ratifying the treaty and observing a voluntary moratorium on testing.

Having lived a special World Day of Peace on Jan. 1, this is a time for every Christian to pray and act, to raise a prophetic voice and speak truth to the powers-that-be. How long will we Mennonites sit by lamenting, confused, oblivious or shy? Why abdicate responsibility precisely when we can make such an enormous difference to heal and proclaim life? This is more than a peacemaking issue; it is one of global economic stability, of environmental sustainability, of humane and responsible science, of food security, of international justice and certainly of sharing the good news of Jesus.

I've written my senators; won't you join me? Imagine the literal flood of letters the church could generate. Who could resist such a host of angels calling for peace on earth?—*Tim Eisenbeis, Recife, Brazil*

Trivial pursuit

The Dec. 28, 1999, editorial, "Reality Check," gave a sort of blah taste. Why spend any time, energy and printer's ink on such trivia? Does it really matter if the millennium begins now or a year from now? Editorials should address matters of more importance.—*Jim Suter, Bluffton, Ohio*

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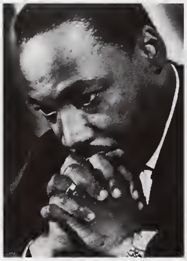
by Marilyn Nolt



Isn't it striking that in 13 years Martin Luther King Jr. received the hearing of the world because he was dedicated to the nonviolence movement?

—John Drescher, Gospel Herald, *April 30, 1968*

Staying power

For Martin Luther King Day, I'd like to share a story that speaks well to the timeless power of our church periodicals and how they often show up in unexpected places.

I work for a Fortune 500 electronics corporation where employees with Christian values are in the minority. The cashier in our cafeteria is a Christian with whom I sometimes have discussions regarding our faith, beliefs and other religious topics. Several weeks ago, as I came up to the register to pay for my food, she said, "I have something here for you." With that, she handed me a copy of an editorial titled "Will We Awake?" from the April 30, 1968, *Gospel Herald.* Written shortly after King's assassination, editor John Drescher decries the violence happening in the world at that time and describes King's witness and the nonviolent witness of the Mennonite Church.

Surprised to see *Gospel Herald* in such a setting and coming from such an unlikely source, I asked her how she came to have the editorial in her possession. She replied that her family had recently cleaned out her stepfather's briefcase, 18 years after his death. Inside they found numerous copies of this editorial, which her father handed out to business acquaintances as he traveled around the country. Further questioning revealed that her father was Brethren and came to Arizona from West Virginia.

Since then, several of my colleagues have read the editorial, and after 32 years, the message is as timely today as when it was written.—*Todd Zuercher, Phoenix*

The price of video violence?

I am proposing that video violence should be taxed. The idea is simple. Let's say that, for each 15 seconds of violence the producers depict in a video or TV show, they have to pay a tax. That tax would be used to first support the monitoring system and then to educate for peaceful conflict resolution and even possibly for victim compensation.

I will send this idea to each Mennonite college peace organization as well as to interested individuals. My hope is that others will pick up the idea and run with it. Research could be assigned in creative ways in schools and colleges. Petitions could be circulated to get people to start thinking about it. Individuals can write letters to the editor and to their representatives. In my wildest dreams, it could become a political issue between candidates.
—Ginnie Burkholder, Canton, Ohio

More on Mary

I was disappointed to find three different authors state in the Dec. 21 issue that Mary was an unwed teenager when she gave birth to Jesus in Bethlehem. In the New International Version of Matthew 1:24 I read, "When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife." The same verse in the King James Version states, "Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife." Every version that I have indicates that Joseph and Mary were married before Jesus was born, even though she remained a virgin until after his birth.—*Joseph J. Voegtlin, Tofield, Alta.*

Integrity and consistency

Shuji Moriichi has suggested that I must want a "pure" church in some tyrannical way (Readers Say, Jan. 4). The fact is, in my Dec. 14, 1999, Readers Say letter, I did not use the word "pure" or any word like it and would not have. (It really ought to be a principle for Readers Say letters not to put words in another's mouth.) It is true that I have been somewhat astounded in recent years to hear Mennonites use "pure" as if it is a dirty word. I do not reject purity as in some sense an ideal. But I do agree that in practice the word can be distorted into a tool for unloving, unredemptive approaches in church life. And my realistic side finds "pure" to be all too absolute to be very helpful.

What I would hope for in the church is basic integrity and enough consistency between words and practice to keep our witness and testimony reasonably clear. Basic integrity surely means that what we do about membership must bear an obvious relation to what we claim we believe. For instance, if we say that warfare and other violence are sin, or the same of marital infidelity, then we ask covenanted members to walk the talk and express the same message in their choices and their lives. And clear witness and testimony in the world requires that we be able to speak and act as a church—rather than with such a cacophony of individualistic voices that nobody can figure out what we think the gospel is. I accept the premise that in real experience, even with all of God's redeeming grace and the work of the Holy Spirit, we Christians never have achieved and probably cannot expect to achieve anything as absolute as "pure" implies. But surely we can pursue policies for basic integrity and clarity of witness.—*Theron F. Schlabach, Goshen, Ind.*

In defense of permeable boundaries

by Michael Jewell

Though bees work with equal industry
on both sides of the fence, palpably unaware
of property lines, I must bend
two lengths of barbed wire,

catching my coat as I squeeze
between them, if I want to reach the river
where bracken grows in layered planes
and square-tailed trout

flash upstream with little provocation.
I examine the disfigured places
on the trunks of maple trees
for how the bark has been forced

to accommodate pieces of embedded metal
and I wonder about my good neighbors.
Do they also coexist in the manner
of rust and wood,

living for years with an uneasy truce?
Have they tried cutting a dead tree
which harbors hidden nails and dulls their
saw blades?

When I cross their land I wait for twilight
when the whippoorwills begin their
incessant repetitions, or I wake
before dawn so I can catch

the sun as it rises from behind the hill.
I stand among the poplars as if I were
one of them, while the object
of my search remains

momentarily concealed, each leaf a permutation
of a single form, and I embrace
the nucleus that blooms from the tip
of every stem.

Michael Jewell lives in Burlington, Vt.

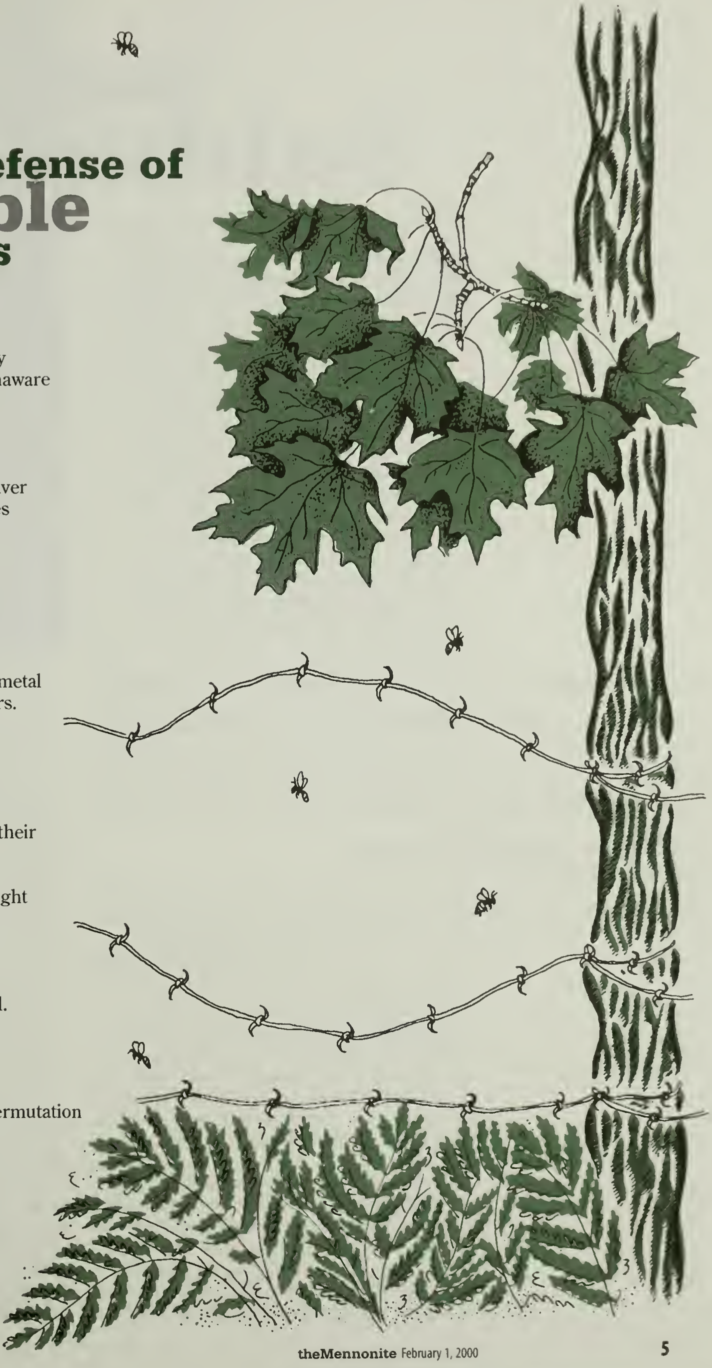


Illustration by Teresa Pankratz

Remember the Sabbath

We rest in peace on the Sabbath because we believe the world is in God's hands.

by John Rempel

Traditional cultures are characterized by rhythms that guide the flow of time. During a year I spent in the Philippines, I often stayed in rural areas. Without fail, the Angelus bell rang at noon and at 5 p.m. When people heard it, they immediately stopped what they were doing and joined in a collective, silent prayer. It was a short break, but it interrupted the frantic pace with a moment of recollection.

Industrial society began the obliteration of this rhythm of time—with set times of work, worship, lament and festivity for the entire community—with massive factories whose machines were kept going day and night to achieve maximum efficiency. This breaking down of a shared rhythm of work and rest is even greater in our technological society, where the craving for access to information overrides all other values. I groaned at a recent advertisement for Federal Express that offered Sunday delivery. This change has practical relevance for me in my Mennonite Central Committee work at the United Nations. Occasionally it becomes urgent to send or receive documents on an important issue. Until now Sunday was my day of refuge from the tyranny of deadlines. Now I am faced with the choice of discharging documents on the Sabbath or feeling guilty or irresponsible for not doing so.

The Sabbath was the first universal human right, the great equalizer; at least on one day of the week there were no masters and no slaves. The Sabbath was a dangerous day; think of the ideas it gave oppressed people about the possibilities of creating a just society.

In Jewish theology the Sabbath is the first step in reversing the Fall, in placing the world back into God's hands. In the Fall we tried to take the world into our hands, insisting we knew better than God what makes life good. This flight from God leaves us with an overwhelming realization that now the only meaning in life is one we create. The basis of human existence is no longer who we are—children of God—but what we make. Capitalism sees people as doers: On weekdays they are producers; on weekends they are consumers. And most of us conclude that life has passed us by if we are not engaged in one or the other.

The Hebrew commandment for a day of rest includes everyone, not just people of power and privilege, those rich enough to stop working at any time because they can make others work for them. Rest is offered not only to parents but also to children, who were in charge of household duties in that society, to cattle, which drew carts and pulled plows, and to sojourners, people from other tribes who had no rights in their host's culture. Today's sojourners in our society are undocumented aliens who do everything none of us is willing to do when we want it done. The Sabbath was the first universal human right, the great equalizer; at least on one day of the week there were no masters and no slaves. The Sabbath was a dangerous day; think of the ideas it gave oppressed people about the possibilities of creating a just society.

The basis of the Sabbath: On the seventh day of creation God rested because on the previous six days he had shaped order out of chaos. God was busy creating a harmonious whole out of sunshine, flowers, fish and people. All of them were interdependent, belonged together; all of them were kept from destruction by the steadfast, almighty love of God. We rest in peace on the Sabbath because we believe the world is in God's hands. That is the foundational belief of Judaism and Christianity. Human existence does not need to be one of frantic striving, because God is in charge.

Our experience tells us that chaos continues to threaten order and that death keeps trying to swallow life. Jesus' resurrection is the ultimate sign that life is stronger than death, that good is stronger than evil. In early Christianity, Sunday became the church's Sabbath because it was the day on which the world had been preserved from the return of chaos. Already in the New Testament there is talk of "the Lord's Day," the day of Jesus' triumph, the day that assured the world and all God's

creatures that they could rest in him. Every Sunday became a little Easter.

Living out Sabbath rest and restoration: Only in a world in which God provides, in which we are not on our own, can we rest in peace. When we celebrate the Lord's Day weekly, we are taking God at his word, letting go of anxieties about where we belong because we are already children of God. And we can't become more than that. Remember what Jesus asks about a loving parent: "If [a] child asks for an egg, will [the father or mother] give a scorpion?" (Luke 11:12).

How do we observe a liberating Sabbath? Don't work, don't shop, don't worry. Squander time, worship God, welcome someone into your life.

1. Don't work. In order not to work on Sunday, we need to take forethought on Saturday. This means finishing work or school assignments, cleaning, shopping, paying bills. And the most important thing is to tell ourselves that whatever we haven't finished by Saturday evening can wait until next week.

2. Don't shop. To do so we need to break the power of advertising over us. It tries to tell us we can find satisfaction only in consuming or in planning to consume. Think of people who are compelled to work on Sunday because of consumer demand. By not shopping we can lower the need for Sunday employment.

3. Don't worry. This is a tall order. We begin the path to serenity by grounding ourselves in the simple truth that we are children of God. Then we become secure enough to break the tyranny of our anxieties. We learn to discern those things that can wait for another day and those that we can't change no matter how much time we have.

4. Squander time. Do something for no other reason than that it expresses creativity or brings pleasure. If you plant flowers, do so for the fun of it, not because you feel obligated to improve your environment. If you read, do so for inspiration, not information.

5. Worship God. Take more time on Sunday than a weekday allows to find yourself in the presence of God. Play music that awakens you to love and beauty and laughter. Above all, gather to sing and pray with your sisters and brothers. One of the most tangible and underrated witnesses we give to the meaning of the gospel in our lives is assembling for worship. When we do so, people see what matters most to us. In the midst of the rushing river of life, they see that there are people who rest on a Rock.

How do we observe a liberating Sabbath? Don't work, don't shop, don't worry. Squander time, worship God, welcome someone into your life.

6. Welcome someone into your life. Go beyond a quick drink and a superficial electronic mail message as the extent of your connectedness to others. Visit or write a letter to an old friend, a sick person, someone you've never had the opportunity to know.

Most of you are skeptical about what I'm proposing. All I can say is, try it. Remember, you can't and you don't have to earn your salvation. You are already a child of God. Work and shopping do not make you who you are, God does.

John Rempel is pastor at Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship.

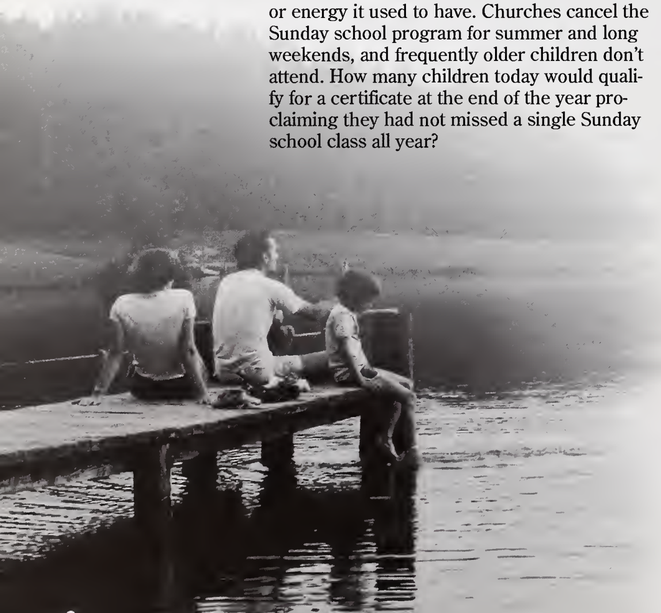
Rethink the Sabbath for today

by Gerald Gerbrandt

Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy.
—Exodus 20:8

When I was young, we all knew what the above verse meant. Our Sundays were fairly predictable. In the mornings we went to church, first for Sunday school, then for the worship service. It was an unusual Sunday if we didn't do some visiting during the day, either with people from church or with the extended family, either for lunch, during the afternoon or for "faspa" (an early, light supper). And in the evening we normally returned to church for the weekly "Jugedverein" (Sunday evening service). And there was no regular work on Sunday, no shopping, no professional entertainment and no organized athletics. Sundays were for worship, Christian education and fellowship. (I'm assuming in this article that the Christian substitution of Sunday for the Old Testament Sabbath is legitimate.)

How times have changed since the 1950s! Of my childhood traditions, only Sunday morning worship remains vigorous. Sunday evening services are a rarity. Sunday school continues, but in some settings it is under siege, and in most congregations it no longer has the status or energy it used to have. Churches cancel the Sunday school program for summer and long weekends, and frequently older children don't attend. How many children today would qualify for a certificate at the end of the year proclaiming they had not missed a single Sunday school class all year?



The nature of our fellowship has changed as well, especially in urban areas. Hospitality takes much time and energy, and with many homes having all adults employed full time, there is too little of either to spare. We enjoy visiting in the lobby after the Sunday morning service, and it is not uncommon to have lunch together in a restaurant, but the regular fellowship in homes has declined dramatically.

Perhaps the greatest change is in our attitude toward work on Sunday. Virtually overnight we have moved from being a people in which the odd person who had a job that required work on Sunday felt guilty about it, even if it were in the health-care profession, to a people where little if any thought is given to taking a job that requires work on Sunday. For many, shopping is a common Sunday activity. Except for the holy hour in the morning, Sunday has become largely indistinguishable from the other days of the week.

Worship: But, we say, worship and the Sunday morning service remain important. And that is true. Although attendance may not be assumed as faithfully as it used to be—after all, there are children's athletic and musical competitions, holidays, weekends away, and we wouldn't want to be legalistic about attendance—worship has remained significant. In fact, it receives more attention than it ever has, at least in its preparation. In January 1999, Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, sponsored a conference on music and worship. More than 350 participants came, when only 100 had been expected. Throughout our church there is a strong desire and commitment to make the Sunday morning worship service more sensitive, more meaningful, more responsive to the needs of the people. This is good, but I question whether this one hour can carry all the weight we place on it.

Many factors have affected this decreased status of Sundays in the life of our Mennonite communities. One has to be the change in the larger society. In my childhood, the church preached respect for the Sabbath. But equally important was the whole series of "blue laws" that protected or enforced the church's teaching about the Sabbath. Those blue laws have largely disappeared in both Canada and the United States. Businesses are open, and work on Sunday is common.

William Willimon refers to a Sunday evening in 1963 as a watershed of sorts. On that evening the theater in Greenville, S.C., *Might keeping the Sabbath become one of the critical ways the church is again marked as different from the world?*

broke a longstanding tradition and opened its doors on a Sunday evening. Willimon and a number of his friends slipped out of the weekly Methodist Youth Fellowship service and watched a John Wayne movie. No longer was the state going to protect the church community from the ways of society. (See *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* by Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, Abingdon Press, 1989.) If Sunday was going to be a holy day for the church, the church would have to make it happen; the state was not going to do it for us.

There are different possible responses to these trends. One option is to accept what has developed as inevitable, perhaps even as progress in light of earlier legalism, then make the best of it. This appears to be the response we have chosen. Yet it is dangerous. The Sabbath command is too important to ignore.

A second option is to lament the fact that the state no longer appears to support the Christian tradition, then lobby with the state to once more enforce the Sabbath. Not only would such efforts be futile, however, given the pluralism of North American society, they would be inconsistent with our Anabaptist theological traditions. And even if successful, it would only contribute to keeping the church lazy, dependent on the state to protect its teachings.

Rethinking: A third option is for the church to devote itself to reviewing and rethinking the meaning of the fourth commandment for our day: “Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God” (Exodus 20:8-10a). Now that society no longer protects the day for us, the church must discern what it means to keep the day holy.

In this process the church will discover a rich resource for Christian theology and practice. In his book *Deuteronomy: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (John Knox Press, 1990), Patrick Miller highlights a whole series of implications of the Sabbath:

- The Sabbath is a gift from God.
- It provides rest within the cycle of life.
- It is a reminder of God’s redemption, in the Exodus and through Jesus Christ.
- It looks forward to God’s promised rest.
- It works to protect the first and second commandments.
- It challenges our inclination to identify ourselves primarily by our work or occupation.
- It is a mark of the people of God.
- It treats all people equally. Each one of these could be expanded and developed in the life of the church.

Take, for example, the suggestion that the Sabbath can be a mark of the people of God. Historians of Israel tell us that the Sabbath received a renewed emphasis during the time of the Babylonian exile. In that context keeping the Sabbath was one of the characteristics of Israel that distinguished it from Babylonian society. During the first half of the 20th century, when the Sabbath was a national day of rest, it could not serve this function. Today it is different. Keeping the Sabbath may become one of the critical ways the church is again marked as different from the world, as a people shaped not by the larger society but by a story in which God redeems people and invites them to remember that redemption one day each week.

The starting point for such a review must be the biblical text—the Old Testament commands about the Sabbath, the Old Testament stories and the writings of the New Testament with Jesus’ interpretation of these expectations. Within the biblical text the primary emphasis is on rest, not working. The call to remember what God has done in the Exodus may be taken as a summons to do Christian education. But neither fellowship nor worship are explicitly mandated. This does not mean the Sunday morning worship service should be discarded. But it does raise a question about making it the one observance that defines the day.

I am not suggesting a return to a former era—that is neither possible nor desirable. Nor am I assuming this requires a rejuvenation of our Sunday school programs or a return to an earlier pattern of inviting people over for Sunday lunch. Rather I am asking for a much more basic rethinking of how the Sabbath can function within a people committed to being faithful to God. Rest, Christian education, community building and fellowship, mission and worship should all be considered. There is much potential here and a strong biblical tradition with which to work. Perhaps this could be a major agenda item for the new Mennonite Church.

Gerald Gerbrandt is president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College in Winnipeg.

For many, shopping is a common Sunday activity. Except for the holy hour in the morning, Sunday has become largely indistinguishable from the other days of the week. Students and church workers may be the worst offenders.

Newlyweds newest Japanese export

Couple finds retired mission worker to do ceremony

Newlyweds and Japan natives Ken and Sachiko Fujie are flanked by Peter and Lois Voran, former mission workers to Japan. Peter officiated the Fujies' Christian wedding ceremony in December at the Vorans' church, Shalom Mennonite Church of Newton, Kan.

GCMC photo by Virginia Claassen

NEWTON, Kan.—In its 12 years of existence, Shalom Mennonite Church in Newton has been the setting for numerous weddings—but none like the one held on Dec. 26, 1999. That's when Japan natives Sachiko Kojima and Ken Fujie were married by Peter Voran, who with his wife, Lois, served in Japan for 30 years with the Commission on Overseas Mission.

It was not the first time Peter Voran played an important role in Sachiko's life. Nineteen years ago, when she was 11, Peter officiated at the baptism of her and her father at Hyuga Mennonite Church in Miyazaki, Japan. A sister had been baptized in the church several years earlier, and within a year Sachiko's mother also became a Christian and was baptized.

In the early 1990s, Sachiko spent a year in Canada with Mennonite Central Committee's International Visitor Exchange Program (IVEP).

Ken did not grow up in a Christian family, although he attended a Christian kindergarten in Japan, where he was given a New Testament, which he read several times. He also memorized the Lord's Prayer, which became so meaningful to him that he found it difficult to fall asleep without praying it. As a young boy, he wanted to attend church but knew no one who was a Christian and found it difficult to go alone. Finally, at age 22, Ken began attending a United Church of Japan congregation, which he located in the yellow pages. A year and a half later, he was baptized.

Ken's interest in developing countries led him to work for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), similar to the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID). He spent three years in Kenya and, upon his return to Tokyo, formed a group to pray for Kenya and developed a web page to share his burden for the country.

In 1999, several hundred miles away in Hyuga, Sachiko was on vacation from her part-time job as a junior high school English teacher when she decided to do a web search for "Christian male." The one who caught her attention was a young man interested in working in developing countries—Ken Fujie.

After two weeks of Internet correspondence, Sachiko and Ken began to talk on the telephone, and they soon arranged to meet in Hyuga. They met again on the northern island of Hokkaido when Ken was on a business trip. By the time of their third meeting, again in Hyuga, Ken had decided to propose marriage.

They were legally married in Japan. But because Ken was suddenly transferred to Washington, D.C., there was no time for a Christian wedding ceremony. Sachiko remembered the relationship her family had shared with the Vorans, who left Japan in 1995 and retired to North Newton, Kan. So the Fujies had their wedding ceremony at Shalom, where the Vorans are members.

Several retired Japan mission workers who live in the Newton area attended the ceremony, as did Doreen Harms, IVEP director at the time Sachiko spent her year in Canada.

The Fujies live in Arlington, Va., where Ken works as a liaison between JICA and USAID. "They have not only committed their lives to each other," Peter Voran says, "but also to their Lord, whom they seek to serve in developing countries."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Japan Mennonites in brief

Japan is home to five Mennonite conferences, with a total membership of about 3,500 in 75 congregations, according to Mennonite World Conference.

Connecticut venture preparing workers

It had been a longtime dream for Jim Miller and Henry Buckwalter. Now that dream is becoming reality.

Harvest School of Ministry started this fall with 30 students at Gospel Light Community Church, a Lancaster Conference congregation in Bridgeport, Conn. Miller is the pastor and Buckwalter the bishop.

"As a church, we want to call and commission, send and support people in the world harvest," Miller says.

Classes are held Wednesday evenings, using a curriculum written by Buckwalter. Classes are taught predominantly by local leaders from nine denominations. Subjects include worship, leadership, theology and missions.

"We have everybody, from brand-new believers to elders, deacons and cell group members," Miller says.

Classes will continue through May 2000 with plans for a second term starting in September.—*EMM News Service*

MWC sharing fund tops $1 million in receipts, $163,000 in grant disbursements to members

STRASBOURG, France—Phil Bergey calls it a "God moment," when his congregation, Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church, seized the notion of the changing dynamics of the international Anabaptist church.

"In January 1999 at a congregational meeting, I made the suggestion that we include [Mennonite World Conference's] Global Church Sharing Fund in our annual budget," Bergey says. "I explained briefly what I understood the fund was about, and bingo, a new line item was born."

Within the past year, Charlotte Street Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pa., also decided to make regular contributions to the Global Church Sharing Fund to support the work of Mennonite World Conference (MWC) member conferences around the world. In the midst of a $1.8 million project renovating their meeting place, Charlotte Street members agreed to give a tithe of that amount—$180,000—for other ministries of the church, including 80 percent for the Global Church Sharing Fund. The money will be sent in installments during the next five years.

The two Pennsylvania congregations bring to four the number of North American congregations who have made the fund a regular part of its giving. Like Charlotte Street, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind., is also contributing a percentage of money designated for a building project. Wanner Street Mennonite Church, Cambridge, Ont., has made annual contributions since 1995.

The fund was started in 1994 with $600,000 from Mennonite Central Committee and $300,000 from Mennonite Mutual Aid. With subsequent contributions and interest, the fund has now topped $1 million. In addition to the four congregations' commitments, fewer than a dozen other congregations plus some individuals have given to the fund.

"We sort of said, 'Can we shoot for a million?' " says Kathryn Good, MWC director of administrative services. "We knew this was in some ways an experiment. We didn't know if people would pick up on it."

Since the first funds were distributed two years ago, the Global Church Sharing Fund has sent $163,660 to 53 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ conferences in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The conferences, which have to apply for the grants, have the freedom to use them as they wish. The money is available simply "to advance the work of the church," says Larry Miller, MWC executive secretary.

The Mennonite Church Congo used most of the money it received to buy bicycles for evangelists, who otherwise would have to walk on their missions. The Nicaraguan Brethren in Christ conference invested in dairy cows. They are placed in the care of church members who, in return for caring for the cows for three years, may have the milk.

The size of the grants is determined by church membership; the largest grant given so far has been $5,000. Applicants have to meet guidelines such as being in good standing with partner churches and agencies and not have any internal leadership disputes.

The Global Church Sharing Fund will be evaluated at the July MWC General Council meeting in Guatemala. The 100 delegates, representing 80 conferences in 50 countries, will hear reports from the grant recipients on their uses of the grant money.—*Larry Kehler of MWC News Service with Rich Preheim*

We knew this was in some ways an experiment.

—Kathryn Good

International mission agencies to hold first consultation in July

GUATEMALA CITY—Representatives from some 50 Anabaptist mission agencies from around the world and Mennonite World Conference (MWC) officials will meet in Guatemala City July 12-16 to seek a vision for Anabaptist missions in the new millennium.

While there have been a number of smaller such mission consultations over the past 25 years, the Guatemala City meeting, called the Global Anabaptist Mission Consultation (GAMCo), is the first designed to bring together all mission agencies. A recent survey found that 30 of the "newer" Anabaptist churches in Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe are engaged in cross-cultural evangelism, deploying about 500 workers within their countries and beyond. Those sending churches include those planted by mission workers or resulting from emigrant movements from the historic Mennonite communities in Europe and North America in the past century.

For example, North American Brethren in Christ sent their first mission workers to Zimbabwe in 1898. In 1983, the Brethren in Christ Church in Zimbabwe and its North American partners planted a BIC church in Malawi. The Malawi church, in turn, sent out its first workers last year, planting six congregations among Muslims in remote areas of the country. The Malawi church is also considering an outreach to neighboring Mozambique, where the Brazil Mennonite Church already has workers.

GAMCo, which will be held prior to a meeting of the MWC General Council, is being sponsored by MWC and the Council of International Ministries, an association of U.S. and Canadian Mennonite and BIC agencies. Consultation topics will include mission theology, goals and cooperation on a global level.

The consultation was originally scheduled to be held in Colombia but was relocated due to the political and social instability there.—*Peter Rempel for MWC News Service*

Gatherings planned to boost integration

NEWTON, Kan.—A series of 29 gatherings are scheduled throughout the United States from March to June to share with General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church members results of last fall's "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" congregational study and to encourage support for the emerging Mennonite Church USA.

Nearly 500 groups in 335 congregations participated in the six-part "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" study late last year. Study results were shared for the first time at a Jan. 28-29 consultation in Elkhart, Ind.

Sixteen preachers have agreed to speak in one or more gatherings. Each gathering will begin with a session for church leaders and conclude with a public worship service. Dates, locations and preachers are:

March

5—First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., Duane Beck
12—Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa., Michael Banks
12—West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa, Diane Zaerr
19—Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb., Jim Schrag
19—College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., Jonathan Larson
19—First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind., Owen Burkholder
19—Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, Gilberto Flores
26—Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., Janeen Bertsche Johnson

April

2—Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church, Jonathan Larson
2—Norristown (Pa.) New Life Mennonite Church, Michael Banks
2—Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, Pa., Bernie Wiebe
2—Washington (D.C.) Community Fellowship, June Alliman Yoder
9—Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va., John C. Murray
9—Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind., Diane Zaerr
9—Reba Place Fellowship, Evanston, Ill., Janeen Bertsche Johnson
30—Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla., Bernie Wiebe
30—Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, Okla., Duane Beck
30—New Holland (Pa.) Mennonite Church, Dwight McFadden

May

5-7—First Mennonite Church, Denver (Rocky Mountain Mennonite Conference sessions), June Alliman Yoder
7—First Mennonite Church, Morton, Ill., Ervin Stutzman
7—Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church, Jim Schrag
14—First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio, Loren Swartzendruber
21—Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa., Diane Zaerr
21—Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, Pa., Ervin Stutzman

June

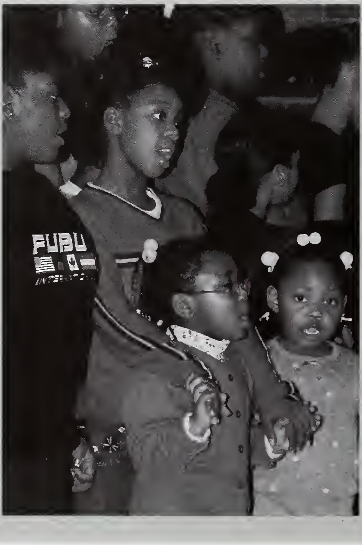
4—Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D., Doug Penner
8—Casselton (N.D.) Mennonite Church (North Central Conference sessions), Bernie Wiebe
11—Community Mennonite Fellowship, Corning, N.Y., Leslie Francisco III
22—Moses Lake (Wash.) High School (Pacific Northwest Conference sessions), Anne Stuckey
24—Northern Calif. (Pacific Southwest Conference sessions), John C. Murray

2001 convention planners meet

More than 30 planners of the Nashville, Tenn., 2001 Mennonite convention held their first meeting Jan. 14-16, gathering in the city to choose themes, look at facilities and shape programs.

Nashville 2001 will be held Monday evening, July 2, through Saturday noon, July 7, at the Opryland Hotel on the outskirts of the city. Activities will be offered for adults, young adults, youth, junior high students and children.

Kingly singing



Mary E. Klassen

Children from St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church in Elkhart, Ind., provide music for Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's observance of Martin Luther King Day on Jan. 17. The Elkhart school canceled classes for a special chapel service with Franklin Breckenridge, pastor of Community AME Church in LaPorte, Ind., and a 1999 AMBS graduate. Activities also included a forum with Ron Davis, president of the Elkhart chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Peace Factory under new management

ARCHBOLD, Ohio—Paul zumFelde, a Lutheran pacifist, first saw the Peace Factory in Archbold in November 1996 during its three-year tour across North America. Intrigued by this new way of teaching peace, he inquired about replicating the factory.

He was initially rebuffed, told that the factory still had to continue its tour and that the many small parts make it a nightmare to set up. But zumFelde was persistent.

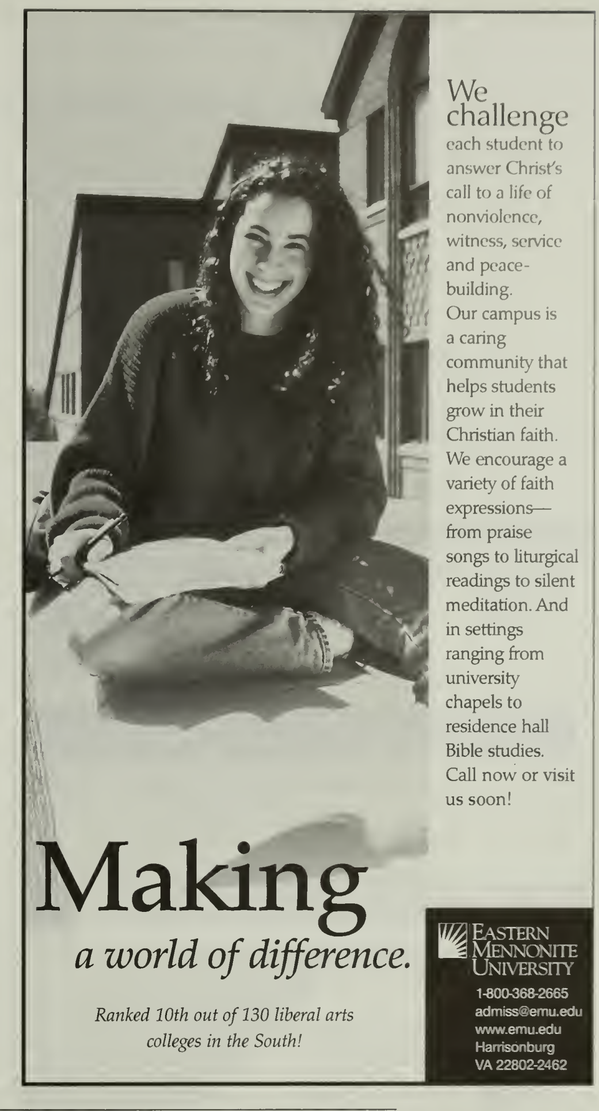
"[He] just kept calling and saying, 'We want it,' " says factory coordinator Susan Mark Landis of the Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee. "He had a vision, and that's basically what kept it going."

ZumFelde's vision has now come to fruition. He is director of Lutheran Social Services of Northwestern Ohio, which last year purchased the Peace Factory for $1,000. It is now up and running in St. John's Lutheran Church of Archbold.

The Peace Factory was unveiled at the joint General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention in Wichita, Kan., in July 1995. Through 1998, the interactive exhibit was set up in 40 locations, from Atlanta to Abbotsford, B.C. By then, however, the factory had become dated and showed wear and tear. Organizers were considering disposing of the project when they accepted zumFelde's purchase offer.

The factory was renovated and updated last summer. Additions focus on Archbold-area ministries with migrant workers and abused women, on the School of the Americas and how to become a conscientious objector. At the end of the year, zumFelde would like to return the Peace Factory to Mennonite hands to set it up on a college campus.

Peace Factory organizers are now considering what to do with $11,000 left in the Peace Factory fund. The factory and tour were started with $35,000 in grants and donations. During the tour, each hosting site was asked to pay $300 toward upkeep.—*Keep the Faith, Share the Peace*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MDS purchases post office building for new office

AKRON, Pa.—Experiencing tremendous growth since its legal separation from Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in 1993, plus an increase in disasters and volunteer activity, has prompted Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) to find larger office space.

Settlement was made Jan. 13 on the two-story former Akron post office building, which is located four blocks from the MCC office building where MDS now rents space. The purchase had been approved by the MDS board at its November 1999 meeting.

The first floor will house the MDS office, while the second floor apartment will be renovated to accommodate MDS visitors and orientees. Renovations are being done with local volunteer help. MDS anticipates moving next month.—*Marisa Doncevic of MDS News Service*

Choice Books breaks record for sales

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Choice Books sold more than 3 million books in 1999, surpassing the organization's goal of 2.75 million and setting a record for the number of inspirational books sold in one year.

"Prayer certainly has played a major role in the continued success of Choice Books ministry," says director John M. Bomberger. "We have witnessed God's faithfulness in 1999 and look forward with great anticipation to the many new and exciting ministry opportunities in coming years as Choice Books works to ... [share] the good news of Jesus Christ in the secular marketplace."

Now in its 38th year, Choice Books operates through a network of eight regional distributors and 23 district offices that work with the organization's central office in Harrisonburg. With the equivalent of about 100 full-time employees, Choice Books maintains more than 4,200 book displays in airports, discount stores, supermarkets, travel centers, hospitals and drugstores and on nearly 80 military bases across the United States.

Growth in inspirational books has mushroomed over the last decade. Choice Books did not top 1 million books in annual sales until 1991, then broke 2 million books in 1997. Choice Books of Northern Virginia is the organization's largest distributor, selling more than 1.6 million books last year.

"I remember the difficulty in cracking the barriers 30 years ago when the attitude was 'religious books won't sell,' " says Simon Schrock, director of Choice Books of Northern Virginia. "Today inspirational books have become a household word in the marketplace. I'm thankful to God for helping Choice Books make a difference."

CO advocacy group changes its name

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors (NISBCO), the CO advocacy organization founded 60 years ago by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and others, has changed its name to the Center on Conscience and War.

The Washington-based organization was founded in 1940 as the National Service Board for Religious Objectors to address draft and CO issues. Among its founders were MCC, American Friends Service Committee and Brethren Service Committee.

The NISBCO board a year and a half ago changed the name of the organization's office to the Center on Conscience and War. After considerable discussion about having two names, the board in December 1999 decided to rename the organization.

Two Mennonites serve on the board. Longtime peace advocate Titus Peachey of Lancaster, Pa., is appointed by MCC to represent U.S. Mennonites. Glen Guyton, a military veteran living in Hampton, Va., is an at-large member. Also on the board are representatives of Presbyterian Peace Fellowship, Pax Christi, Friends United Meeting, Church of the Brethren, Jewish Peace Fellowship, Episcopal Church and Fellowship of Reconciliation.

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Confession of faith translated into Russian

WINNIPEG—Mennonites in Russia and Ukraine had been wanting to read the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective in their own language. Now they can.

In early January, 450 freshly printed copies of a Russian translation of the confession of faith arrived at the Winnipeg office of Peter Rempel, Commission on Overseas Mission personnel secretary and secretary for Europe.

The confession of faith, originally written in English, was adopted in 1995 as the official faith statement of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. It has already been translated into German and Vietnamese. Most of the Russian translation was done by Russia native Masha Sternik while she was a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in the mid-1990s. She now lives in Moscow.—*GCMC News Service*

Mennonite Foundation names new director

GOSHEN, Ind.—Kathrine Grusy, a seven-year veteran of Mennonite Foundation, has been appointed to the organization's top position. She became executive director on Jan. 1, succeeding Randall M. Jacobs, who returned to private law practice at the end of 1999.

Grusy started her career with Mennonite Foundation in 1993 as a foundation representative and was named the foundation's representative of the year in 1996. She had been the central regional manager since 1997, covering Illinois and Indiana.

After working as a financial planner with American Express, Grusy joined Mennonite Mutual Aid in 1991, working in Member Services before moving to Mennonite Foundation. *—MMA News Service*

EMU wants to sing a new school song

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Not many people know that Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg has an official school song. Even fewer know the tune and lyrics.

An anonymous EMU alumna wants to change that. She is offering $750 for the best text for a new school song. Submissions for a new tune will be solicited later. The competition is sponsored by Encore, the alumni support group for EMU's music department.

"The new alma mater, to be used at homecoming and other events, should reflect EMU's mission, purpose, location and history," says Janet Stutzman, director of alumni-parent relations. "While we hope that a number of EMU grads will try their hand at writing, the competition is open to everyone."

Deadline is April 1.

The school's current school song was last revised in 1942.

MBM team meets with Benin president adviser

COTONOU, Benin—Five North Americans on a Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) work team last month visited with the man credited for the Beninese president's decision to become a Christian.

The five North Americans plus MBM worker Rodney Hollinger-Janzen spent two hours with Romain Zannou, pastor of Foursquare Gospel Church of Cotonou, spiritual adviser to President Matthew Kerekou. A former Marxist, Kerekouswas re-elected to office in 1996 after announcing his conversion.

The North Americans were part of a 12-member MBM team that spent 19 days in Benin last month helping build an addition to the Benin Bible Institute in Cotonou.—*MBM News Service*

Canadian relief sales raise $970,000 in 1999

WINNIPEG—Fourteen Canadian relief sales generated $970,000 (U.S.) for the work of Mennonite Central Committee last year. That is about the same amount raised as in 1998. The Abbotsford, B.C., sale was the top fundraiser with $277,000. The New Hamburg, Ont., relief sale raised $182,000, while the heifer sale in Guelph, Ont., netted $104,000. *—MCC Canada News Service*

by the way ...

Super Bowl XXXIV on Jan. 30 featured teams from the city of the most recent General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church convention, St. Louis (Rams) and the city of the next convention, Nashville (Tennessee Titans).

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Births

Avedician, Ian Micah, Jan. 10, to Lisa (Brandeberry) and Rolland Avedician, Goshen, Ind.

Benninghoff, Thomas James, Dec. 29, to Dan and Janelle (Gaeddert) Benninghoff, Overland Park, Kan.

Bergey, Abigail Evonne, Jan. 5, to Christopher and Wendy (Mead) Bergey, Elkridge, Md.

Booz, Derek Earl, Jan. 2, to Kimberly (Gehman) and Michael Booz, Telford, Pa.

Bradley, Brock Steven, Dec. 20, to Mary (Peachey) and Steven Bradley, Myakka City, Fla.

Carlson, Anna Rose, Dec. 6, to Brad and Kris (Kaufman) Carlson, Hurley, S.D.

Froese, Tyler David, Dec. 22, to David and Tracy (Penner) Froese, Ste. Anne, Man.

Gooden, Kendra Noel, Jan. 5, to Renetta (Stucky) and Russ Gooden, Wichita, Kan.

Hurst, Carter Ryan, Dec. 31, to Chad and Coleen (Rohrer) Hurst, Lititz, Pa.

Kauffman, Maddison Renee, Jan. 7, to Ken and Sharon Kauffman, Harrisonburg, Va.

Kauffman, Tyler Joseph, Jan. 3, to Kim (Stjernholm) and Tim Kauffman, Westminster, Colo.

Kraybill-Voth, Kristin Gai, July 17, 1999, received for adoption Dec. 13, 1999, by Cindy Kraybill and Allen Voth, Denver.

Miller, Eric Alan, Dec. 8, to Rachel (Hartman) and Todd Miller, Garfield Heights, Ohio.

Mirarchi, Christian Tyler, Jan. 9, to Dante Jr. and Janelle (Rittenhouse) Mirarchi, Quakertown, Pa.

Moyer, Tessa Reanne, Jan. 13, to Drew and Mindy (Miller) Moyer, Lansdale, Pa.

Myer, Katelyn Sue, Dec. 23, to Kathy (Cassel) and Kervin Myer, York, Pa.

Nebel, Reese Landon, Dec. 22, to Brenda (Hooley) and Brian Nebel, Hesston, Kan.

Ng, Nathaniel, Dec. 22, to Felicia (Rohrer) and Kok-Hwee Ng, Elkhorn, Wis.

Petkau, Blaine Dillon, Dec. 28, to Annie and Len Petkau, Steinbach, Man.

Schwartzentruber, Benjamin Andrew Wright, Dec. 29, to Mary (Wright) and Murray Schwartzentruber, Kitchener, Ont.

Wiebe, Katie Arlene, Dec. 23, to Kent and Michelle Wiebe, Winnipeg.

Marriages

Alderfer/Fisher: Gayle Alderfer, Tucson, Ariz., and Larry Fisher, Tucson, Dec. 24 at Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, Tucson.

Bartel/PerezRosales: Amanda Bartel, North Newton, Kan., and Derek PerezRosales, Dallas, Dec. 23 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Brazis/Miller: Philip Brazis, Burbank, Ohio, and Ruth Miller, Fredericksburg, Ohio, Jan. 8 at Millersburg, Ohio.

Enns/Johnston: Mary Enns, Raleigh, N.C., and Joe Johnston, Raleigh, Dec. 19 at Raleigh Mennonite Church.

Goering/Taylor: Crystal Goering, North Newton, Kan., and Jason Taylor, Newton, Dec. 18 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Haensel/Stahl: Jeanni Haensel, Sioux Falls, S.D., and Jacob Stahl, Freeman, S.D., Dec. 11 at First United Methodist Church, Sioux Falls.

Hartzler/Renninger: Jessica Hartzler, Belleville, Pa., and Jason Renninger, Belleville, Dec. 11 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Hochstetler/Yoder: Lindsey Hochstetler, Sarasota, Fla., and Ben Yoder, Sarasota, Dec. 11 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Lima/Ranck: Carlos Lima, Brazil, and Heather Ranck, Lancaster, Pa., Nov. 20 at Lancaster.

McClanahan/Wilkerson: Chad McClanahan, Wayland, Iowa, and Robin Wilkerson, North English, Iowa, Nov. 8 at Wayland Mennonite Church.

Miller/Stutzman: Rachel Miller, Colorado Springs, Colo., and Jason Stutzman, Littleton, Colo., Dec. 19 at Belleview Acres Mennonite Brethren Church.

Penner/Reaume: Diana Penner, LaMarque, Texas, and Justin Reaume, LaMarque, Dec. 19 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Deaths

Cressman, Gladys Lightheart, 79, Cambridge, Ont., died Jan. 3. Spouse: Clifford Cressman. Parents: Isaac and Florence Lightheart (deceased). Other survivors: children Anne Olivares, Catherine, Bill; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 6 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Friesen, Irene Regier, 81, Henderson, Neb., died Jan. 9 of cancer. Spouse: Arnold Friesen. Parents: John and Nettie Regier (deceased). Other survivors: children Shirley Goertzen, Dwight, Keith, Boyd; 11 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Gerig, Harry, 78, Lebanon, Ore., died Dec. 28 of cancer. Spouse: Fern Stutzman Gerig. Parents: Amos Sr. and Lydia Boshart Gerig (deceased). Other survivors: children Bob, Gene, Randy, JoAnn Johnstone, Betty Koehn, Colleen Fair, Sherry Calahan; 21 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 3 at Lebanon Mennonite Church.

Goering, Arthur, 89, Newton, Kan., died Dec. 30. Spouse: Amanda Goering (deceased). Parents: John and Jessie Schrag Goering (deceased). Survivors: children Lela Mae Sawatzky, Leona Faye Gingerich; six grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 3 at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton.

Hege, Otto Henry, 92, Aberdeen, Idaho, died Dec. 25 of pneumonia. Spouse: Mabel Steinlicht Hege. Parents: Henry and Barbara Baer Hege (deceased). Other survivors: children Sylvia Schroeder, Barbara Weins, Lucille Taylor, Carol Harguth; 13 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at Aberdeen.

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Hostetter, Rebekah, 21, Oxford, Pa., died Dec. 21 in a car accident. Fiancee: Jake Boyd. Parents: Bill and Melissa Hostetter. Funeral: Dec. 27 at Mount Vernon Mennonite Church, Kirkwood, Pa.

Kipfer, Irene Zehr, 86, Kitchener, Ont., died Jan. 2. Spouse: Nurias Kipfer (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Anna Ruby Zehr (deceased). Survivors: children Orval, Reynold, Beulah; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 5 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Koppes, Melinda Wilke, 102, North Newton, Kan., died Jan. 2. Spouse: Daniel Atlee Koppes (deceased). Parents: Gustav and Mary Elizabeth Knackstedt Wilke (deceased). Survivors: children Dean, Clinton; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 6 at North Newton.

Kurtz, Sara Hershberger, 79, Sarasota, Fla., died Dec. 19. Spouse: C. H. Kurtz (deceased). Parents: Levi and Mary Hershberger (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Beth Camacho-Otero, Samuel, Eldon, Nancy Sollenberger; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 23 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Roth, Ada Alma Birky, 94, Albany, Ore., died Dec. 24. Spouse: Amos Roth (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Amelia Caroline Birky (deceased). Survivors: children Sterling, Kenneth, Glen, Mary Martin; 16 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.

Sauder, Charles, 61, Archbold, Ohio, died Jan. 3 of a stroke. Spouse: Sandy Maust Sauder. Parents: Hulda Baer (deceased) and Floyd Sauder. Survivors: children Mike, Michele Rupp; six grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 8 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Siemens, Katharina Friesen, 101, Altona, Man., died Jan. 4. Spouse: Erdman Siemens (deceased). Parents: William and Katharina Friesen (deceased). Survivors: children Katherina Dyck, Walter; nine grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 8 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Souder, Margaret Mittman, 82, Telford, Pa., died Dec. 29. Spouse: John Souder (deceased). Parents: Elmer and Martha Delp Mittman (deceased). Survivors: children Joan Feldi, John; five grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; one stepgrandson. Funeral: Jan. 2 at Rockhill Mennonite Church, Telford.

Stoltzfus, Sarah, 92, Honey Brook, Pa., died Jan. 6. Parents: Ezra and Annie Kauffman Stoltzfus (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 10.

Stucky, Rochelle, 27, Marion, S.D., died Dec. 3 in a car accident. Parents: Jerry Stucky and Sharon Stucky Engbrecht. Other survivors: children Sierra Brooke, Dacota Dustin. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Unruh, Geneva, 83, Newton, Kan., died Jan. 7 of cancer. Spouse: Harvey Unruh (deceased). Parents: John and Ella Schmidt Unruh (deceased). Survivors: children Donovan, Darrel, Dennis; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 11 at Faith Mennonite Church, Newton.

Waltner, Calvin, 66, Freman, S.D., died Dec. 12. Spouse: Shirley Schrag Waltner. Parents: Henry and Ida Waltner (deceased). Other survivors: children Monte, Lori Schrag, Eric, Wendy Miller; two grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 16 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Waltner, Willie, 81, Marion, S.D., died Dec. 30. Spouse: Gusta Tieszen Waltner. Parents: Henry and Anna Waltner (deceased). Other survivors: children Jerald, Ted, Murray; two grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 4 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Widmer, Paul, 82, Wayland, Iowa, died Nov. 23. Spouse: Tessie Raber Widmer. Survivors: children Carole Reshley, Kenneth, Chris. Funeral: Nov. 28 at Wayland Mennonite Church.

Wiebe, Dwight, 72, Dallas, died Jan. 3. Spouse: Margot Stauffer Wiebe. Parents: F.V. and Agnes Wiebe (deceased). Other survivors: children Ricki, Christine, Franck; five grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 7 at Midway Hills Christian Church, Dallas.

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- **Rosslyn Academy**, K-12 fully accredited school in ***Nairobi, Kenya***, is searching for qualified, dedicated staff for the 2000-2001 school year. Positions open: kindergarten, 5th, middle-school English, middle-school science, technology, computer, librarian, PE.

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- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** seeks ***administrator*** beginning August 2000. Requirements: master's in education or administration and five years teaching experience. K-8 Christ-centered education within Anabaptist framework; enrollment 240; semi-rural section of Lancaster County, Pa.

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- **Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute** invites applications for the position of ***principal*** to begin July 2000. MBCI has a student body of 560 (grade 7 to senior IV) and a professional staff of 40 teachers.

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- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa. (200 students, K-8) is searching for a qualified ***administrator/principal*** beginning June 1, 2000. Candidates shall have the necessary educational credentials and share our commitment to Christian education based on Christian principles from the Anabaptist perspective. WFCS is in its 59th year and is affiliated with the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

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- **Bluffton College** is seeking a ***campus ministries intern*** for the 2000-2001 academic year to work closely with the campus pastor in most areas of ministry on the Bluffton College campus. This position is intended for college graduates and/or seminary students seeking practical ministry experience in the campus setting. Arrangements could be made for obtaining internship credit. Consideration of applications will begin March 1, 2000, and continue until the position is filled.

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- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community**, Harrisonburg, Va., seeks ***pastoral care associate (chaplain)***. Direct pastoral care and counseling of nursing and assisted living residents, and as needed crisis spiritual care throughout campus. Includes worship planning and leadership, team relationship with staff and coordination of pastoral volunteers. Position requires some seminary training, Clinical Pastoral Education, ordination or licensing, experience in geriatric ministry.

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by Rich Preheim

Back on the religion mat

After being repeatedly pinned for the views of religion he expressed in *Playboy* last year, Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura apparently found himself grappling for ways to escape. In a letter to the president of the Minnesota Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, he claimed respect for religionists—although not all of them. The letter was reprinted in *Liberty,* the U.S. Seventh-day Adventist magazine.

"While organized religion has not been a major influence in my adult life, I respect the beliefs and choices of others, including my close family members," Ventura wrote. "Tolerance is at the core of my own personal beliefs."

But there is a limit to his tolerance. In explaining the reasons for his negative opinions, Ventura goes on to write: "I witnessed many instances of so-called religious leaders marketing their beliefs to people too uneducated to comprehend what they were talking about and too poor to afford the money they were being asked to hand over. ... I would think the spirit of religion would put the needs of people and families first and profits last.

"Further, I have always been offended by the imposition of extreme beliefs on another. I've witnessed in recent years an intolerance by some right-wing leaders that disturbs me."

A smorgasbord of spirituality

Speaking of tolerance of beliefs, some 6,000 delegates representing more than 200 religious groups attended the third Parliament of the World's Religions, held in Cape Town, South Africa, in December.

And there were a lot of beliefs to test one's tolerance. According to *Christianity Today*, one New Age leader claimed to be channeling Joseph, husband of the Virgin Mary. Supreme Master Ching Hai, a rising guru, told delegates that God "never looks at our sin." Scientology president Heber Jentzsch declared that the teachings of movement founder L. Ron Hubbard represent the highest truth. And Yogi Bhajan, a Sikh leader, predicted that the coming millennium will be the world's worst.

Lectures and seminars covered topics such as ecology, nonviolence, science, poverty and Native American struggles. Nelson Mandela received an award for his battle against apartheid.

Christian theologian Hans Küng said that while there are "undeniable differences" between religions, it helps to have consensus where possible, especially around ethical issues.

Angels on screen

Spiritual warfare may never have been so fun. A Minneapolis company has released *The War in Heaven,* a video game that allows players to assume the role of a good angel or a fallen angel at the time of Lucifer's expulsion from heaven. Players then engage in "spiritual warfare in its purest form," according to *Faith Today.*

The game's maker says it intends to create a line of games that employ the Bible as the background for character development and plot lines.

Meanwhile, *The Choice Game,* a new CD-ROM, allows players to explore the results of a series of life choices. An angel and a devil appear on screen with advice for players each time they have to make a decision. The angel can be configured for either Catholic or Protestant teaching.

But can you use a Looney Tunes postage stamp?

Here's a helpful etiquette tip from the *Chicago Sun-Times* via *Context* newsletter (which is always trolling for such nuggets): The proper closing for a letter to the pope is, "Prostrate at the feet of Your Holiness and imploring the favor of its apostolic benediction, I have the honor to be, Very Holy Father, with the deepest veneration of Your Holiness, the most humble and most obedient servant and son [or daughter]."

Notes the *Sun-Times,* "Which is why he gets so few postcards."

Something for further study

Presbyterian Record recently uncovered some discouraging statistics about student bodies and church bodies in the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Of the denomination's 985 congregations, 827 have church schools. Forty-six of those schools have more than 100 students, 69 have between 51 and 100 students; 348 have 21-50 students, 210 have 11-20 students, and 154 have less than 10. At the same time, an estimated 500 congregations have 10 or fewer children attending church on Sunday morning.

Packing a piece or picking peace

At their biennial international conference in April, Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints delegates will consider a resolution from the Australian Region encouraging members "to renounce the personal uses of all firearms as a personal stewardship of peace," reports *Saints Herald.*

Tidbits

- According to one survey, the top three reasons for lower attendance in rural congregations are: members place less importance on church attendance (30.7 percent), declining rural population (30.2 percent) and increasing number of families with both parents working (16.6 percent).—*Successful Farming*
- Eighty-two percent of all church plants die before they are a year old. —*Evangelical Visitor*
- Roberts Wesleyan College, Rochester, N.Y., has launched the nation's first social work program designed to prepare students for work in church agencies and congregations—*Light and Life*
- Ninety-six percent of the World Council of Churches' funding comes from nine nations.—*ChristianWeek*

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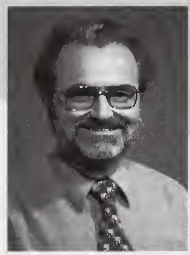


J. Lorne Peachey

Amish butter and mennonite cheese

"We ought to stop some time," I tell myself or my family every time we go by the billboard with huge letters on I-70 in eastern Indiana: "Amish butter, next exit." But we never do. I say it's because the schedule's too tight. I suspect the real reason is because, as one whose father was Amish until age 14 and who has numerous Amish relatives, I'm afraid I'll be embarrassed by what I find. Or I worry I'll become even more cynical about such crass commercialism of what is supposed to be a belief system.

One of our readers, Earl F. Burkholder, wasn't as reticent when he saw "mennonite cheese" (yes, with a small "m") on the menu of a Las Cruces, N.M., restaurant. He asked the waiter for an explanation. "Oh, that's a white cheese; we make it ourselves" was the reply. Burkholder didn't push the conversation further—nor did he sample the cheese.

I cringe at such misunderstandings of who we are as a people of God. But as a small group in the global Christian church, a group that until now has evolved from three or four major ethnic strains, we Mennonites (and Amish) in North America have always struggled with an identity defined by culture as much as by belief, even among ourselves.

If we are faithful to God's continuing call to lives of love, devotion, purity and service, we will become known as a unique people who have something different to offer.

How would I wish we were known?

I remember my conversation with a family counselor in Pittsburgh several months ago. When she found out I was a Mennonite, I saw a change in her eyes. "Do you know Mennonites?" I asked. "Oh, yes," she replied. "You are the people who have done wonderful work in mediation and reconciliation."

More recently, in a weekly electronic newsletter he writes for religious leaders around the world, church historian Martin Marty used a Mennonite as an example of how to tell who is a Christian. (It's a story that has circulated among Mennonites about an Amishman, but by the time it reached Marty the man had become a Mennonite.) When asked if he were a Christian, the man replied: "Here's a list of 10 people who like me and 10 who hate my guts. Ask them."

This is what Anabaptist-Mennonites have always wanted to be about: putting faith into everyday practice. Sometimes that's what others think about when considering who we are. More often it's our food and furniture, our organizational skills and our ability to get things done that capture their attention.

Perception of who Christians are and what they are about has always been a rough path. Even when the church was formed at the day of Pentecost, onlookers got it wrong; they thought the disciples were drunk (Acts 2:15). The name Christian itself was first applied to the believers by outsiders in Antioch (Acts 11:26), probably in a derogatory manner.

No, we cannot control the public's perception of who we are. But we can work at being faithful to God's call to live kingdom lives, with the hope that someday this is what captures the attention of others, rather than some uniqueness in our ethnic background.

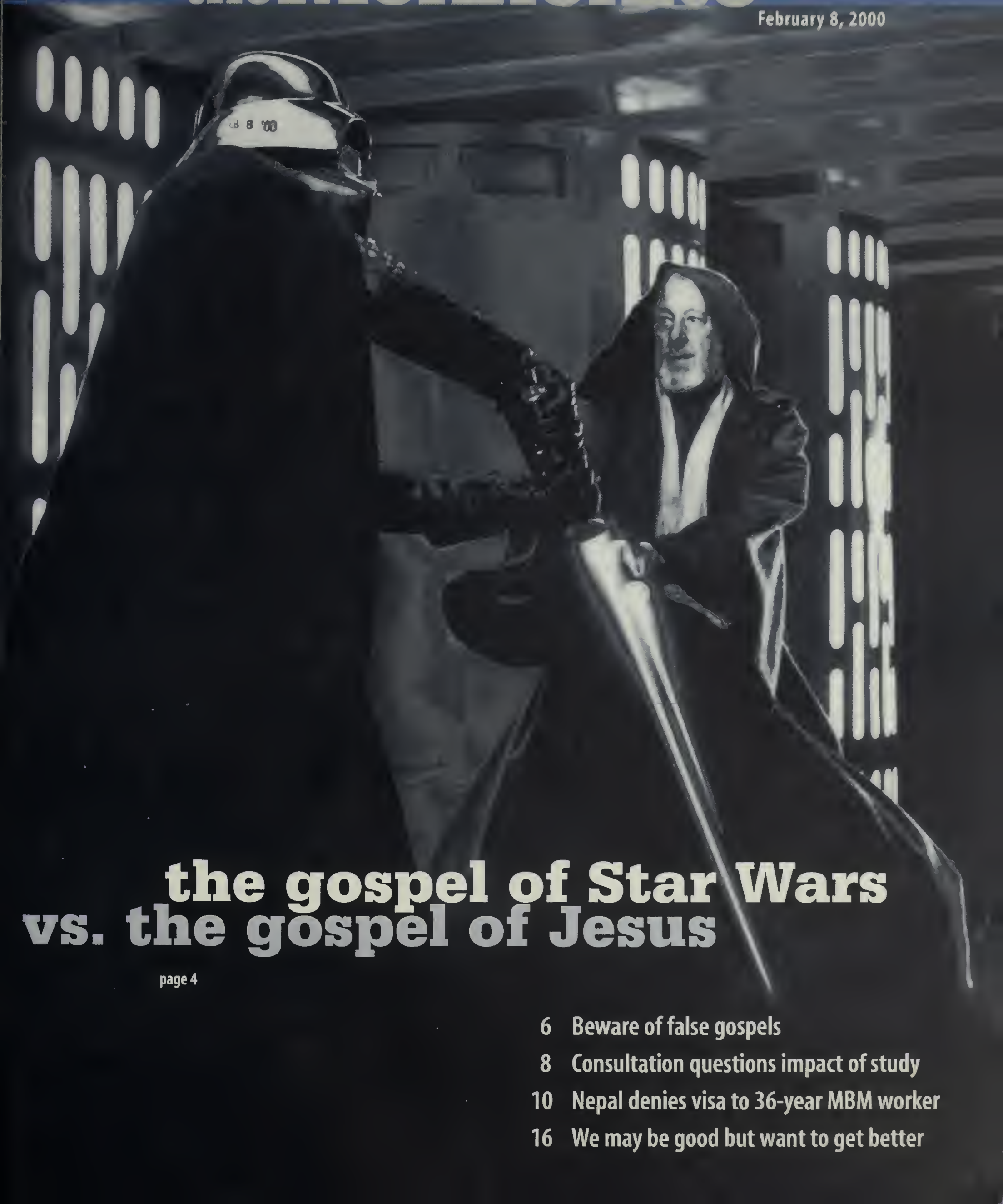
In this issue, both John Rempel and Gerald Gerbrandt point to one area in which God may be calling us to greater faithfulness: observing the Sabbath. Today, even for Christians, Sunday gets us away from the regular routine for an hour or two at best. It is no longer the day of rest and relaxation God intended. Rempel gives some ideas of how the church might recapture R and R once a week (page 7). Gerbrandt challenges us to make the Sabbath "one of the critical ways the church is again marked as different from the world" (page 9).

As Christians we do not live in ways just to be different. But if we are faithful to God's continuing call to lives of love, devotion, purity and service, we will become known as a unique people who have something different to offer.

The Sabbath. Peace. Reconciliation. Mediation. Forgiveness. Healing. Care for the earth. The list of the differences we can make as children of God continues to grow as time lengthens and the earth ages. I dare to dream that we will be faithful enough to someday find this sign, in huge letters, beside I-70: "Peace, contentment, reconciliation. Next exit."—*jlp*

the Mennonite

February 8, 2000



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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

On change and confrontation

I was still mulling over in my mind the comments of Patricia Lehman McFarlane ("The Call to Courage") in the January 11 issue—especially her quote from Guy Hershberger in opposition to nonresistants taking part in any pressure campaigns or coercive tactics—when I came to J. Lorne Peachey's editorial ("The Ever-Whirling Wheel of Change"). This helped me put things back in perspective. Clearly there has been a lot of change within the Mennonite community about our acceptance of nonviolent direct action programs. I am supportive of the work of Christian Peacemaker Teams and other similar actions, especially in areas where we have a history of relationships that adds credibility to our involvement, as for example in the Hebron area of Palestine. At the same time, we should not too easily discount the less confrontational, longer-range service and mission programs of the Mennonite churches. I think, for example, of the long-term interracial ministry of the Orlo Kaufman family in Gulfport, Miss.

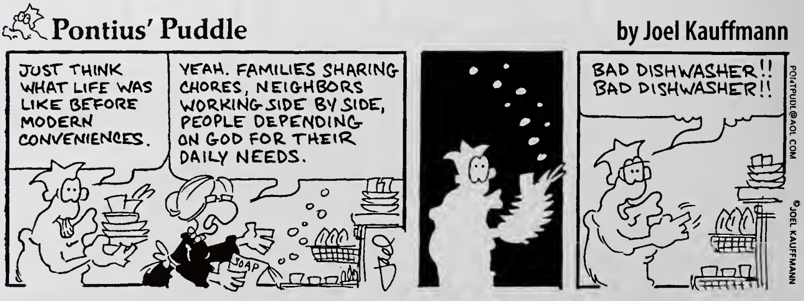
It was my good fortune to travel several times with Guy Hershberger in the southern states. I recall especially returning with him from one of the meetings of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (Martin Luther King Jr.'s organization) via the Atlanta airport. We were a group of five people, three whites and two African-Americans, and decided to try to eat supper together before our return flights at the still-segregated Dobbs House restaurant. By the time we were seated around a table in the heart of the large dining room, we were informed that they could not serve our interracial group. After a less-than-fruitful discussion with the manager, we finally asked whether the three of us whites could order dinners. When the food arrived, we shared the utensils and food and had our meal together—to the consternation of the management. In later years, Hershberger occasionally recalled this incident with satisfaction, I believe, that we had not simply accepted the manager's decision that we could not be served. Was this a pressure tactic, in Hershberger's own definition, or had his thinking changed?

Clearly there is room for more than one approach in the work of the kingdom. Canadian Mennonite leader Frank Epp once observed that in the longer-range course of human history, it may well be that the more conservative Mennonite and Amish groups will be the remnant that preserves the Anabaptist peace church witness, rather than those of us who have become more acculturated and more socially and politically involved in contemporary society.—*Elmer Neufeld, Bluffton, Ohio*

Spirit of respect

I read the letters in Readers Say and get very weary of the pros and cons of the homosexual issue. The God I know is a God of both love and justice and has given us words of Scripture to pattern our lives after. When I read the Bible and our confession of faith statement about marriage, I don't see God's law changing to excuse the sexually active, either gay or straight outside of marriage. I believe many Mennonite Christians hold this view and should not be thought of in terms of "murderous talk" and "pet views" (Readers Say, Jan. 11).

How much better it would be to respect each other with different views and refrain from printing any more such controversial letters. I have lived long enough to know that we probably won't change each others' views. I often think of a song I learned as a child. The words go something like this, "You go to your church and I'll go to mine, but let's walk along together." How we need the spirit of this song in our day.—*Edith King, Goshen, Ind.*


Pontius' Puddle
by Joel Kauffmann
JUST THINK WHAT LIFE WAS LIKE BEFORE MODERN CONVENIENCES.
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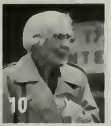
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y readers say

The Holy Spirit's call

Disbelief, discouragement and disappointment swirled within me as I read Isaac Stoll's opinion about women in church leadership (Readers Say, Jan. 18). One can easily form an argument against women in church leadership by compiling Scripture interpreted out of context. However, when one takes into consideration the male-dominated society in which Scripture was written, when one realizes that the Scriptures we read today have been translated repeatedly by men, a new perspective on the gospel results. Jesus' life demonstrates his acceptance of all people, and his words encourage every one of his followers to share the gospel by using their God-given gifts.

I am a woman whom God has called into church leadership. I sense God's call within me, and it has been affirmed by my church community and family. I desire to act on this call in the Mennonite Church, and my hope is that our denomination can encourage all people, men and women, to follow God's call in their lives.

So while some are asking, "Who are we to overrule God?" by allowing women to lead, I ask, "Who am I to reject the calling of the Holy Spirit?"—*Amy Chupp, Wayland, Iowa*

New Year's Eve party

J. Lorne Peachey's suggestion on how to bring in the New Year (Editorial, Oct. 26, 1999) was such good news that we decided to implement it. We did all of the things suggested; we even added a Mexican piñata for the children. It was a delightful evening of videos, food, games and song. At five minutes to the new millennium, we broke into prayer groups and finally ended the evening with "Praise God from Whom," No. 606, I mean No. 118 (some things should not change).—*Joseph Yoder, Hartville, Ohio*

Cover photo
by Religious News Service

A tale of 2 gospels

by Doug Kaufman

The choice between the gospel of Star Wars *and the gospel of Jesus Christ*

As Americans and as Christians, we learn two gospels—the American gospel and the Christian gospel. The expression of the Christian gospel is found in Ephesians 2:11-22, and the expression of the American gospel is found in *Star Wars*, the series of movies by George Lucas. In his book *Saint Paul at the Movies* (Westminster John Knox, 1993), Robert Jewett calls *Star Wars* a gospel, meaning that it offers a view of salvation.

The Star Wars gospel: What is the *Star Wars* view of salvation? The original movie pits the Old Republic rebels against the evil Galactic Empire. Luke Skywalker is the hero of the rebels, and Darth Vader is their nemesis in the Empire. The Empire has devised a weapon of ultimate destruction, the Death Star, able to destroy an entire planet in a single blast.

The climax of the movie is when the rebel cruisers descend upon the Death Star to attack its one weakness. Luke Skywalker, the only remaining pilot, evades Darth Vader and at just the right moment shoots two torpedoes. The Death Star explodes into a billion fragments, lighting up space in a spectacular nuclear explosion. Theater crowds have cheered this scene many a time.

In the movie there are clear-cut good guys and bad guys. The response to the bad guys is to destroy them. Salvation comes through the destruction of those who are evil. Violence is the way to salvation.

An American gospel: *Star Wars* taps into a deep feeling in the American psyche. As we first watched that movie in 1977, we saw ourselves as the Old Republic rebels and the Soviet Union as the Galactic Empire.

One journalist has credited *Star Wars* with being a catalyst in the turnaround in the United States that occurred in the 1980s. In the 1970s, the economic recession, the oil crisis and post-Vietnam malaise all created a feeling that “there was nothing right with America.”

The optimistic vision of *Star Wars,* that good will ultimately win over evil, helped fuel a sense that we could defeat our enemies. Two phrases from *Star Wars* entered the political vocabulary of the ’80s and helped undergird Ronald Reagan’s confrontation with the Soviet Union. In a famous speech, Reagan called the Soviet Union an “evil empire.” One of his military projects, the Strategic Defense Initiative, became known as Star Wars. So the message of *Star Wars* both shaped and was shaped by our national mood. For this reason *Star Wars* is an American gospel.

The gospel *Star Wars* preaches is an old gospel, even older than the gospel of Jesus Christ. The tale it tells has been told for thousands of generations. Theologian Walter Wink, in his book *Engaging the Powers* (Fortress, 1992), calls it the myth of redemptive violence. We find this myth not only in *Star Wars* but in many of our comic books, cartoons and Western movies. This myth is at the heart of much of American civil religion, and much of our foreign policy is based on this myth.

The Christian gospel: In this gospel (Ephesians 2:11-22), salvation comes not through inflicting violence but through peace. Jesus comes not only to proclaim the good news of peace, Jesus is peace.

God takes a bold initiative in Jesus. Instead of continuing a war with humanity, instead of exacting more blood for the blood that we have shed, God makes peace. We might call this a unilateral disarmament. God decides to stop fighting us in the way that we fight each other. Rather than coming and drawing blood, God offers blood. Rather than inflicting violence, God absorbs violence in the blood of Jesus Christ.

And so, through his suffering on the cross, Jesus Christ makes peace between God and humanity. Through Jesus, those who are far from God are brought near. So the gospel is not just about peace with God but also peace with other people. The people far away now join the people near God.

In talking about those who are near and those who are far, Paul is referring to Jews and Gentiles. For Paul this was the most basic division in humanity. There are many ways we divide humanity. But in the cross of Jesus, Paul sees a new reality. He sees that in Jesus all of God’s children can be brought close. There is no more distinction. On the cross, Jesus destroyed the dividing wall of hostility between those who are far and those who are near. So in this vision Paul sees a new community, the church.

God responds to enemies by loving them. The gospel of America responds to enemies by destroying them. The gospel of Jesus Christ responds to enemies by transforming them.

This is the problem with the myth of redemptive violence. In fighting our enemies as they fight us, we become like our enemies. This is the reason we respond in love instead of hate. By embracing hate we become our enemy.

Destruction or transformation? A lot has changed since the first *Star Wars* came out in theaters. Since then the Cold War has ended. We defeated the Evil Empire, we said. The Soviet Union is no more. There is no more Evil Empire. Or so it seems.

You would expect this to usher in a time of peace. Instead we have fought two wars in the span of a decade. We hardly have noticed because both times we have suffered so little. Both times we were able to cause untold amounts of destruction against our enemy with little cost to ourselves. Oh, it cost us money, but we have plenty of that. As a nation we seem able to impose our will all over the world. We can destroy almost any nation that would stand against us. With our nuclear weapons we can, like the Evil Empire with its Death Star, obliterate any opponent. Has the Evil Empire been defeated, or is it slowly finding a new foothold?

God decides to stop fighting us in the way that we fight each other. Rather than coming and drawing blood, God offers blood. Rather than inflicting violence, God absorbs violence in the blood of Jesus Christ.

This is the point of the Christian gospel. This is why we do not retaliate against our enemy in a like-minded way.

But transformation is possible. This is the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And even within the series of *Star Wars* movies there is the possibility of transformation. In the second movie, *The Empire Strikes Back,* Luke Skywalker learns that Darth Vader is his father. His destiny is to face and then battle his father. This is brought out at the climax of the third movie, *Return of the Jedi.*

With the evil emperor looking on, Luke and Vader battle. Hoping that this young man will turn to the dark side of the force like his father, the emperor encourages Luke to feel his anger. Luke is winning against his father and is ready to finally strike Vader dead. Suddenly he realizes that he is embracing the hate that made his father evil. And he says, “No. I’m not going to fight.” He throws aside his weapon and refuses to kill his father.

In that risky act he saves himself and his father. Darth Vader, the epitome of evil, becomes again Anakin Skywalker, defender of the good. In a *Time* interview with Bill Moyers, George Lucas said that this really is the main point of the *Star Wars* series. It won’t be as obvious until the entire series is complete, but the basic question is how Darth Vader is saved. How do we get Darth Vader back? How do we get him back to that little boy that he was in the first [episode], that good person who loved and was generous and kind? Who had a good heart. How do his children help him become wholly himself again? How does he become who he was meant to be?

This is what we should learn from the *Star Wars* movies, the power of transformation, the power of love, not the power of weapons and violence. And this is how we should witness to our government during these years of regional wars. We should ask our government to be more creative in its diplomacy, to value the life of all God’s children, even our enemies, to work with the community of nations rather than imposing our will on others. I am not so naive as to believe our nation will disarm. But I believe we should be much more reluctant to use violence.

As Mennonite Church USA we have a unique witness and challenge as Anabaptists in this nation. Our challenge is to make the initials USA stand for something other than a jingoistic chant at the Olympics or the letters on any number of our highly sophisticated and destructive weapons. Our challenge is to make the word “peacemaker” mean something more than the euphemistic name of a nuclear missile. We must dare to offer an alternative vision of our role as a nation. I don’t want to be known as the most violent nation on earth. I want to be known as a nation that relentlessly pursues peace and justice. In a world where the myth of redemptive violence rules, we have an alternative. Let us pursue the gospel of peace with greater passion than those who pursue the gospel of violence.

Doug Kaufman is pastor at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Akron, Pa.

Beware of false gospels

The gospels of wealth, health and power are based on a selective use of Scripture.

by Daniel J. Reinford

I am astonished that you are so quickly … turning to a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion.—Galatians 1:6,7a, NIV

Gospel means "good news," but the gospel the Galatians were embracing was actually bad news because it was enslaving people rather than liberating them. Perversions of the gospel inspire false hope and sooner or later lead to disillusionment, even despair.

The gospel of wealth: A TV evangelist shouts to his audience, "What is the desire of your heart? Name it, claim it by faith, and it is yours! Your heavenly Father has promised it. It's right there in the Bible" (*Christianity Today*, June 14, 1985).

Is it really in the Bible? Jesus did say, "I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. You may ask me for anything in my name and I will do it" (John 14:13-14).

Later, though, Jesus told the same disciples, "A time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God. … I have told you this, so that when the time comes you will remember that I warned you. … In this world you will have trouble" (John 16:2,4,33).

The Old Testament sees no conflict between Elisha's involvement in the miraculous healing of the leper Naaman and Elisha's own illness, which was not healed. The Bible simply records the facts without any judgmental attitude toward Elisha's failure to recover. And we find the same balanced message in the New Testament.

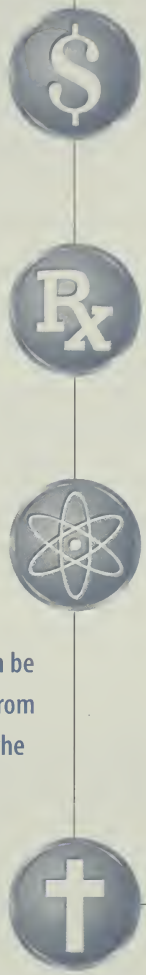
In the Old Testament, wealth is often associated with godly living, but that is not true in the New Testament. Even Jesus had "no place to lay his head" (Luke 9:58). And the apostle Paul writes, "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances" (Philippians 4:11). Neither wealth nor poverty is an ideal; the goal is sufficiency, and surplus is called into question. Paul warns against the desire to get rich (1 Timothy 6:9-11), then adds: "Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life" (6:17-19, NIV).

The gospel of health: Jack Hayford, a California pastor, tells this story: "When my oldest son was born his feet pointed directly outward. At first we all thought this would remedy itself. But by the time he was beginning to pull himself to his feet, nothing had changed. For months special shoes were placed on him and it appeared the next step was leg braces, for still no improvement occurred. … [Anna, my wife] had just left one doctor's office for another. The first, who had been caring for little Jack, had recommended the baby be fit with braces and given therapy by an advanced specialist. Anna had just boarded a bus en route to another specialist that morning and, with the baby in her lap and hands grasping his feet, she simply prayed, 'Lord Jesus, you know how much I would like this little boy's feet to be all right.' That was the entire prayer. Yet minutes later, as she disembarked from the bus, she looked with astonishment at her son's feet—they were perfectly straight. What months in remedial shoes had not changed had been rectified by the touch of Jesus in 15 minutes" (*Charisma*, February 1987).

I love that story. But I also think of Joni Eareckson Tada and the diving accident about 30 years ago that has kept her in a wheelchair ever since. During these years she has received many letters chiding her for her lack of faith in claiming divine healing. She and other suffering Christians often lament the fact that fellow Christians are sometimes a greater source of pain than is their bodily affliction.

The gospel of health, like the gospel of wealth, is based on a selective use of Scripture.

The prophet Elisha was a great miracle worker. Even after he died and was buried, a miracle occurred (2 Kings 13:21). But why had Elisha died? 2 Kings 13:14 tells us he died of a lingering disease. The Old Testament sees no conflict between Elisha's involvement in the miraculous healing of the leper Naaman and Elisha's own illness, which was not healed. The Bible simply records the facts without any judgmental attitude toward Elisha's failure to recover. And we find the same balanced message in the New Testament. On the one hand,



Paul reports that Epaphroditus "was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him" (Philippians 2:27). On the other hand, he informs Timothy that he left Trophimus behind in Miletus because he was sick (2 Timothy 4:20). In Lystra, Paul healed a crippled man who had never walked (Acts 14:8-10), but he advised Timothy to "stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses" (1 Timothy 5:23). King Herod had James beheaded, but Peter was miraculously delivered from prison (Acts 12). Then there is Paul's "thorn in the flesh," which persisted despite Paul's repeated pleas (2 Corinthians 12:7).

Years ago, Charles Colson of Prison Fellowship had a bout with cancer. During his hospital stay he came to see the health-and-wealth gospel as a stumbling block to evangelism. On his nightly walks through the hospital corridors, dragging his IV pole, he often met an Indian man whose 2-year-old son had had two failed kidney transplants, a brain aneurysm and was now blind for life. Colson writes: "When the father, a Hindu, discovered that I was a Christian, he asked if God would heal his son if he too would be born again. He said he had heard things like that on television. As I listened, I realized how arrogant health-and-wealth religion sounds to suffering families. Christians can all be spared suffering, but little Hindu children go blind. I told my Hindu friend about Jesus. Yes, he may miraculously intervene in our lives. But we come to God, not because of what he may do to spare us suffering, but because Christ is truth. What he does promise us is much more—the forgiveness of sin and eternal life" (*Christianity Today*, April 3, 1987).

The gospel of power: What do you consider to be the greatest miracle on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)? Was it the rush of a violent wind? Was it the tongues of fire that settled on each person present? Was it the gift of tongues that enabled people of different nationalities to understand what was being said? Or was the greatest miracle that day the repentance of 3,000 people and the birth of the Christian church, the creation of a new community of faith that eventually became worldwide?

A generation later the Christians at Corinth were priding themselves on their spectacular spiritual gifts, especially the gift of tongues. But Paul tells them, "I could not address you as spiritual, but as worldly—mere infants in Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:1). Does this not suggest that spectacular or even miraculous gifts are not in themselves evidence of spirituality?

Why should anyone be rewarded for gifts received? God is much more concerned about the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). But it takes time for fruit to develop, and we live in an age in which people want instant results or some supernatural evidence as assurance of their salvation.

Tom Houston was a Baptist missionary to Kenya, later the communication director for the British and Foreign Bible Society, then director of the Lausanne Conference for World Evangelization. More than 20 years ago he wrote: "I get two sets of signals from my Bible. There are pictures about rushing mighty winds, floods, baptisms by fire, places shaking and so on—all symbols of power, force, violence, coercion, crashing, breaking, burning, overwhelming, all big and great and grand. On the other hand, I hear about God not being in the wind and the fire and the earthquake but in the still small voice. I hear about it not being by 'might' and 'power' but—strange to say—'by my Spirit.' Now, being the kind of person I am, I cannot stand the great and the grand. It goes to my head, and that will not do. So I have to want the Spirit of Truth rather than the Spirit of Power. ... I believe that God brings out the range of gifts and experiences that are needed for each situation and each person. I believe in the Holy Spirit who brought me to Jesus when I was not looking for him, who has kept me alive when the odds were that I should die as a Christian, who consistently reduces me to size (so he can use me), who still seems to work in other lives through me, sovereignly as he chooses for the glory of Jesus" (*Eternity*, August 1975).

The good news of the gospel is that we can be set free from the guilt of sins in our past, from the control of sin in the present and from the very presence of sin in the future.

The good news of the gospel is that we can be set free from the guilt of sins in our past, from the control of sin in the present and from the very presence of sin in the future. Freedom from sin's guilt and addictions and an eternity in heaven. That is good news.

Daniel J. Reinford lives in Kulpsville, Pa.

Consultation participants question how study will help shape transforming Mennonite Church

ELKHART, Ind.—Some 80 area conference, denominational and agency leaders came to the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary campus in Elkhart to discuss last fall's "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" congregational study. By the time the consultation was finished, many of those people left wondering what had been accomplished.

The study invited U.S. and Canadian congregations to provide input for the transformation process of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conference of Mennonites in Canada into the new Mennonite Church. Nearly 500 groups from 327 congregations responded. Among the findings, which were released at the Jan. 28-29 consultation, were a desire to link service and evangelism and to make the church a united, welcoming community.

For some consultation participants, there wasn't much significant in those findings. As conference minister for Western District Conference, Marv Zehr said he constantly hears such sentiments. "I don't think I heard anything particularly new here," he told the consultation, echoing comments from others heard throughout the weekend.

"How many more consultations could I or should I go to?" Zehr said.

Also criticized was the lack of participation from some quarters of the church. Few responses were received from congregations of people of color, theologically and culturally conservative congregations and new congregations.

"Many churches found this to be an irrelevant study," said Jeff Wright, Pacific Southwest Conference area conference minister for Southern California.

He told the consultation that none of the responding congregations from his region were younger than 25 years old. "We talk about envisioning a new Mennonite Church without new Mennonites as part of that process," Wright said. "I have profound reservations about the usefulness of this study."

At the same time, the themes of unity and welcoming diversity were found repeatedly in the responses to the study's 22 questions. Fifty-three percent of respondents said their congregations are "a sign of the reign of God" when they are "a true community [loving, engaged, accepting, respectful, healing, caring]." Forty-nine percent said they want to become more "inclusive, welcoming and caring" communities.

To do so will require intentionality and sacrifice, consultation participants said. "If we want to be inclusive, we need to be prepared to give up things … that could be very painful to some of us," said Central District Conference representative Robert Ramseyer.

Gilberto Flores of the Commission on Home Ministries' Hispanic Ministries emphasized having diverse groups participate at all levels of the church, not just have representation on top boards. "It means you need to come and have a space," he said.

Among other study findings, 49 percent of respondents said church members are doing God's mission when they "share Christ in words and deed," holding together the service and evangelism components of faith. "Peace and evangelism are on the same side of the coin," said Joy Kroeger of the Mennonite Church Canada General Board.

Based on the study's findings, consultation participants drew up a one-page summary which called for the new denomination to be structured around the Vision: Healing and Hope statement and urged flexibility in structure, program and resources.

But Wayne Hochstetler, a conference minister for Illinois Conference, questioned what will be done with the consultation's work. "I confess some disappointment and disillusionment," he said. "Is this simply going to be a bland philosophy that churches will look at and say, 'What does that mean, and where did our input go?' "

Jim Schrag of the Mennonite Church USA Transformation Team said the greatest benefit was in the congregations' wrestling with the issues raised in the study and not in the compilation of the results. "Most of the good of this process occurred before they put the stamp on the envelope and sent it [back]," Schrag said.

David Miller of Allegheny Conference agreed, saying, "This study has been very concrete" for congregational self-examination.

The consultation's findings will be used by a mission consultation in March and will also be used for the 29 congregational gatherings planned for March through June across the United States.—*Rich Preheim*

Congregational study findings

Following are some of the responses to questions in the "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" congregational study, the results of which were released at a Jan. 28-29 consultation in Elkhart, Ind.:

- The main image of the church for our congregation is: caring community (46 percent)
- Our main image of the wider church (area conference and denominational levels) is: enabling our work together in mission and service (37 percent)
- As a wider Mennonite Church, we are a sign of the reign of God when we are: united (32 percent)
- Our denomination lets its light shine by: service programs (67 percent)
- The most important missional taks of the new Mennonite Church is: inviting others to follow Jesus (42 percent)
- In order to bring about the new Mennonite Church, we commit ourselves in the next two years to: pray (38 percent)

Rural MVS unit courting urban input

Kansas community wants cross-cultural exchanges

GOESSEL, Kan.—Goessel is establishing a Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) unit and looking for workers to help meet some pressing community needs. But there is more to it than that. Organizers are also seeking cross-cultural exchanges.

Goessel, a town of 550, is part of a tightly knit Russian Mennonite community that has existed in rural south central Kansas for 125 years. "We would like to find first-generation Mennonites to come live, work and share in a well-established Mennonite community that might be different from the newer Mennonite communities many of them are part of," says Jane Ann Voth, chair of the Goessel MVS Council.

That is a sign of the times, says MVS director Miles Reimer. "Rural life is changing," he says. "It needs input from urban centers. At the same time, these rural Mennonite communities still shine from their roots in Mennonite faith and history, and can offer that to urban Mennonites.

"It used to be that MVS units in urban centers would introduce rural Mennonites to the cities. Now there are numerous urban Mennonites who know little or nothing about life in the 'traditional' Mennonite communities."

Goessel boasts three Mennonite congregations: Alexanderwohl and Tabor in the country nearby and Goessel in town. There is also Bethesda Home, a Mennonite-affiliated nursing and long-term care facility.

The idea for the MVS unit was born as a way to help Bethesda find adequate staffing. But the vision quickly expanded, says Voth, whose husband, Dwight, is a Goessel native.

"We want to break down walls," she says. "Goessel has been changing. In my husband's day, Goessel High School was all Mennonite, and now it isn't. There are more and more people moving in who are not from Mennonite background, and Goessel is having to deal with some new issues, struggling with acceptance and reaching out to others."

Voth, originally from Ohio, says that she and her mother were the first in her family to attend a Mennonite church. "So I feel like a first-generation Mennonite and that I bring that perspective," she says. "Our Anabaptist faith and values need to be constantly worked at because we can get so comfortable and complacent."

The Goessel MVS Council hopes to place volunteers in assignments at Bethesda Home or in a "family life group," where volunteers will serve as consultants to the sponsoring churches, the unit and the community, "helping to develop activities and programs to strengthen and enrich family life and break down walls of fear and prejudice," according to the unit's brochure. Some of these activities might include after-school programs for children and youth or family counseling.

The unit, MVS's newest, has no volunteers yet. MVS agreed to take the unit into its fold on the condition that council members do their own recruiting. "At the time the idea of the unit was conceived, about 18 months ago, we didn't have enough volunteers for the existing units," Reimer says, although he adds that with recent large orientation groups, the picture is beginning to change.

The Goessel unit will be part of MVS's financial and administrative structure, including volunteer orientations and retreats.

"It's a struggle to find the time and energy to put into recruiting," Voth says. "It's a big job and there is a lot of work ahead, but we feel God has been leading us and will continue to lead."

MVS is a joint program of the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Board of Missions. There are currently 31 MVS units in the United States and Canada with 116 MVS workers.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM news services*

> Now there are numerous urban Mennonites who know little or nothing about life in the 'traditional' Mennonite communities.
>
> —*Miles Reimer*

EMM photo

Dedication celebration

Marchers from Cojaj, Guatemala, fill the streets en route to Sejol, 40 minutes away, for the dedication of a new Mennonite church building in late December 1999. The new congregation has 20 families from the K'ekchi' indigenous group.

Missionary, women's group leader dies

Graber

GOSHEN, Ind.—Minnie Ruth Graber, longtime missionary to India and former president of the Women's Missionary and Service Auxiliary (WMSA, later Women's Missionary and Service Commission) of the Mennonite Church, died Jan. 11 in Goshen. She was 97.

Graber served in Dhamtari, India, through Mennonite Board of Missions from 1925 to 1942 with her husband, J.D. Graber, who later was MBM executive secretary for 23 years. She also served as president of the WMSA from 1950 to 1959, traveling and speaking in many churches. It was during her tenure as president that the organization changed its name from the Women's Missionary and Sewing Circle Organization to WMSA to reflect a desire to join into one body all women's groups in the Mennonite Church.

"We praise God for the tremendous legacy of distinguished service and faithfulness we have inherited from Minnie," says MBM president Stanley W. Green. "With J.D., she was part of a team that profoundly transformed the Mennonite peoplehood and moved us closer to the biblical vision of a global community drawn from every tribe, tongue, people and nation."

At a memorial service in Dhamtari, India, for J.D., who died in 1978, Indian Mennonite bishop P. J. Malagar said, "In all of Brother Graber's work, Mrs. Graber had a big part."

Graber was born March 18, 1902, in Wright County, Iowa, to Elias and Sarah Swartzendruber. As a child, she dreamed of being a missionary in China. While a student at Hesston (Kan.) College, she became gravely ill from an injury received while playing basketball in the team uniform of a dress and black stockings. The dye in the stockings infected a knee after she scraped it in a game. The infection spread, eventually sending her into a coma. As her mother sat by her bedside, Graber closed her eyes and heard the words "Saved for service." She experienced a full recovery.

A memorial service was held Jan. 16 at Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind., officiated by grandson Andrew Kreider, the congregation's pastor.

Graber is survived by one daughter, Eleanor Kreider, an MBM worker in Oxford, England; a son, Ronald Graber of Aibonito, Puerto Rico; seven grandchildren; and 14 great-grandchildren.—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

Nepal denies visa renewal to 36-year MBM worker

ELKHART, Ind.—After 36 years and landmark nutrition work in Nepal, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) worker Miriam Krantz' visa will not be renewed by the Nepali government.

Krantz received word of the development on Jan. 14. In denying her visa renewal, the government expressed appreciation for her work but said only, "35 years in Nepal is enough" as the reason for the decision. Krantz was also denied a temporary extension of her work visa.

She has been granted a tourist visa, allowing her to stay in Nepal while alternative arrangements are made for the remainder of her term. COM and MBM are exploring options for Krantz to continue work in nutrition in a similar setting, possibly India.

Krantz is known in international health circles for recovering an ancient food now called "super flour," a porridge made from native roasted and ground grains and legumes. It is a high-calorie, protein-laden and inexpensive food credited with saving the lives of many malnourished children in Nepal.

Krantz first went to Nepal in 1963 with MBM. COM and MBM have jointly appointed her since 1999. During her time in the country, Krantz served as a nutritionist, hospital dietitian, director of community health projects, community development worker and Bible teacher. She had planned to remain in Nepal until retirement.—*Bethany Swope of MBM and GCMC news services*

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MDS to celebrate 50th anniversary June 2-4

AKRON, Pa.—Hesston (Kan.) College will host the 50th anniversary celebration of Mennonite Disaster Service on June 2-4, expected to be the largest gathering of MDS supporters ever.

The weekend will feature members of the Sunday school classes from Hesston's Pennsylvania (now Whitestone) Mennonite Church who started MDS in 1950. Scheduled speakers are Peter Dyck, Millard Fuller, Robert Kreider and Peter Wiebe. Other events will include workshops, displays, tours and a golf tournament. A new MDS book, *The Hammer Rings Hope,* will be released. A banquet will be held June 2 at the Kansas State Fairgrounds in Hutchinson.

The 2000 MDS all-unit meeting will be held in conjunction with the celebration.—*MDS News Service*

First MC member joins Mennonite Men board

NEWTON, Kan.—Mennonite Men, the men's organization of the General Conference Mennonite Church, has added the first Mennonite Church member to its board. Mark A. Kniss of Harrisonburg, Va., has been named interim representative for Southeast and Virginia, two MC area conferences.

Mennonite Men last year awarded a Tenth Man grant to Grace Mennonite Church in Lacey Springs, Va., the first MC congregation to receive such a grant. Tenth Man grants support the construction or purchase of new church buildings.—*GCMC News Service*

MBM grant to aid Hispanic outreach in Oregon

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite Board of Missions has given a $4,000 Evangelism and Church Development grant to support the development of a Hispanic congregation in McMinnville, Ore.

Simon Rendon is pastor of Centro Cristiano Pentecostes de McMinnville, located in a growing community of 20,000 Hispanics but where there is little Hispanic church presence. Pacific Northwest Conference will oversee the project.

"This sort of partnership between the conference and denominational mission agencies allows us to do more than we might otherwise be able to do," says Duncan Smith, Pacific Northwest missions minister. "The Hispanic congregations in our area have an aggressive vision for continuing to plant new congregations."—*MBM News Service*

Colombia church approves plan to restructure

CACHIPAY, Colombia—Decentralization has come to the Mennonite Church of Colombia. At its annual assembly last month, delegates overwhelmingly approved a one-year trial to shift more responsibilities to regional structures.

Since the 1960s, the church had operated under one legal structure that held all properties and was the legal employer of all church employees. The church had held annual delegate assemblies and regular general board meetings and had also had national staff members. Under the approved plan, most of that work will now go to three new church regions.

"A national structure will remain but with diminished responsibilities," says Peter Stucky, the new Mennonite Church of Colombia president.—*GCMC News Service*

Retreat property sold to Michigan camp

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) has sold its 115-acre Mirror Valley Retreat, located in Cass County Mich., to Amigo Centre, a Mennonite camp near Sturgis, Mich., for $75,000.

Since 1984, Amigo Centre had leased Mirror Valley as an extension of its main site. Prior to 1984, the retreat was known as Mennonite Youth Village. Administered by MBM, it was used for small group retreats and nature programs for urban youth. MBM received most of the property in a series of gifts from Joseph and Alice Brunk in 1948 and 1949.—*MBM News Service*

by the way ...

The U.S. Mennonite Brethren Conference has set a goal of 20 new congregations in the next five years.—*Mennonite Brethren Herald*

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Workers

Graber, Donovan, on Nov. 30 completed a pastorate at Eden Mennonite Church, Moundridge, Kan.

Martin, Glenn H., on Jan. 1 completed a pastorate at Gilead Mennonite Church, Chesterville, Ohio.

Peak, Michael, on Jan. 1 began a pastorate at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Births

Bontrager, Kaylie Madison, Jan. 5, to Clint and Lindsey (Haines) Bontrager, Hutchinson, Kan.

Fisher, Shana Faith and Shelby Grace (twins), Jan. 9, to Jeanie (Schwartz) and Kevin Fisher, Millersburg, Ind.

Hostetler, Ian Matthew, June 16, 1999, received for adoption Jan. 5, 2000, by Mary (Yoder) and Merle Hostetler, Lakewood, Colo.

Kilmer, Madilyn Joy, Jan. 9, to Karilyn (Kauffman) and Kevin Kilmer, Goshen, Ind.

Lopez, Victor Ramon, Nov. 30, to Lora (Brown) and Saul Lopez, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Alexis Morgan, Jan. 5, to Darlene Gordon and Aaron Miller (deceased), Wolcottville, Ind.

Rowley, Ashlee Wilder, Jan. 7, to Karla (Wilder) and Larry Rowley, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Shantz, Alex Rae, Jan. 10, to Holly (Kuepfer) and Kevin Shantz, Drayton, Ont.

Shingler, Jack Logan, Jan. 3, to John and Landa (Lepley) Shingler, Creston, Ohio.

Speigle, Caleb Alexander John, Jan. 14, to John and Vanessa Speigle, Harrisonburg, Va.

Thien, Alexander Joseph and Andrew Stephen (twins), Jan. 12, to Dan and Kelly (Kaufman) Thien, Flower Mound, Texas.

Thomas, Braydon Alexander, Dec. 15, to Amy (Detrick) and James Thomas, Salisbury, Pa.

Yoder, Elizabeth Anne, Jan. 18, to Kate (Miller) and Wes Yoder, Seattle.

Zehr, Mason Kenneth, Jan. 14, to Krista (Frankenfield) and Kyle Zehr, Telford, Pa.

Marriages

Mast/Silsley: Dale Mast, Richmond, Va., and Kathy Bergey Silsley, Chesapeake, Va., Dec. 24 at Mount Pleasant Mennonite Church, Chesapeake.

Deaths

Bontrager, Esther Schrock, 86, South Hutchinson, Kan., died Jan. 11 of an aneurysm. Spouse: LeRoy Bontrager. Parents: William and Mary Ann Schrock (deceased). Other survivors: children Berma Graber, Franklin, Gary; 10 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 15 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

Burckhart, Mabel Ressler, 90, Orrville, Ohio, died Jan. 13. Spouse: Elias Burckhart (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Mary Wenger Ressler (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Carolyn Powers, Mary Hoover; 11 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 17 at Orrville Mennonite Church.

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Chamberlin, John, 57, Waterloo, Ont., died Dec. 22 of cancer. Spouse: Anna Hemmendinger Chamberlin. Memorial service: Jan. 6 at Laurel Church Centre, Waterloo.

Culp, Isaac, 86, Vineland Station, Ont., died Dec. 13. Spouse: Erla Culp. Other survivors: children Michael, James, Helen, Sharon Culp-Ressler; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 16 at First Mennonite Church, Vineland.

Eigsti, Carrie, 64, Rock Falls, Ill., died Jan. 16 of cancer. Parents: Chris and Lizzie Mae Hostetler Eigsti (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 19 at Rock Falls.

Groh, Cora Gingrich, 92, Cambridge, Ont., died Jan. 9. Spouse: Harold Groh (deceased). Parents: Enoch and Rebecca Witmer Gingrich (deceased). Survivors: children David, Mary, Ruth Wiens, Elizabeth Rudy, John, Deborah; 10 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Habegger, Lucille Luginbuhl, 85, Bluffton, Ohio, died Jan. 19. Spouse: Lowell Habegger. Parents: Gideon and Dora Reichenbach Luginbuhl (deceased). Other survivors: son Ronald; four grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Bluffton.

Jantz, Alvin, 87, Moundridge, Kan., died Jan. 9. Spouse: Anna Neufeld Jantz (deceased). Parents: Isaac and Carrie Jantz (deceased). Survivors: children Lois Neufeld, Marvin, Sharon Showalter; nine grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at First Mennonite Church of Christian. Moundridge.

Klassen, Heinrich, 81, Steinbach, Man., died Jan. 3. Spouse: Anna Klassen. Funeral: Jan. 7 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Landis, Elmer, 96, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 6. Parents: Benjamin and Lillian Landis (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 10 at Souderton Mennonite Homes Chapel.

Lehman, Ann Zehr, 56, Sarasota, Fla., died Jan. 6 of cancer. Spouse: Kermit Lehman. Parents: Lloyd and Sarah Zehr (deceased). Other survivors: children Victoria, Betty Freeman, Kelly Hayes, Christy Flagg; five grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 10 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, Lowville, N.Y.

Lugibihl, Roy, 69, Pandora, Ohio, died Jan. 16 of cancer. Spouse: Mildred Schutz Lugibihl. Parents: Alvin and Edna Bechel Lugibihl (deceased). Other survivors: children Jay, Jeff, Jodi Diller, Jenny Fish; 10 grandchildren. Memorial service: Jan. 22 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Miller, Richard, 93, Hesston, Kan., died Jan. 8. Spouse: Ida Yoder Miller (deceased). Parents: Alf and Lavina Yoder Miller (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 13 at Yoder (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Oberholtzer, Frances Wolfe, 70, Manheim, Pa., died Jan. 10 of cancer. Parents: Lloyd and Rose Wolfe (deceased). Survivors: children Pat Carson, Nancy Witmer, Rosanna, Fred, Karl, Kevin; 13 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 14 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Overman, Dennis, 56, Morgantown, W.Va., died Jan. 3 of complications from heart surgery. Spouse: Sue Overman. Parents: Orton and Marjorie Overman. Other survivors: children Andy, Mike, Amy Huckaby; adopted son Rainer Hinsberg; three grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 5 at Morgantown Church of the Brethren.

Summer, Ruth, 78, Ashley, Mich., died Dec. 22. Parents: George and Minnie Summer (deceased). Funeral: Dec. 24 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Ashley.

Swope, Mabel Basinger, 101, Salem, Ohio, died Jan. 11. Spouse: John Swope (deceased). Parents: Seth and Gertrude Ziegler Basinger (deceased). Survivors: children Martha Graft, John; eight grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 15 at North Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

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Wind, Margaret Hepler, 85, Washington, Ill., died Jan. 10 of pneumonia. Spouse: Raymond Wind (deceased). Parents: William and Ethel Brown Hepler (deceased). Survivors: children Roger, James, Robert; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 13 at Calvary Mennonite Church, Washington.

Yoder, Esther Viola Saltzman, 88, Shickley, Neb., died Jan. 6. Spouse Ralph Yoder (deceased). Parents: Peter and Elizabeth Reeb Saltzman (deceased). Survivors: son Merlin; three grandchildren; two stepgrandchildren; six great-grandchildren; six stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 10 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley.

Yoder, Ruth Kauffman, 94, Allensville, Pa., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Elrose Yoder (deceased). Parents: David and Katie Plank Zook Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Iva, Effie Spicher, Dorothy Headings; seven grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 16 at Allensville Mennonite Church.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Clinton Frame Mennonite Church** has ***used church pews*** for sale, seating capacity around 450, in lengths of 12, 14½ and 18 feet; blond wood with padded seats. Interested people may contact Duane Stutzman, 219-642-3231; email duanes@skyenet.net

- **Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute** invites applications for the position of ***principal*** to begin July 2000. MBCI has a student body of 560 (grade 7 to senior IV) and a professional staff of 40 teachers.

  Address inquiries and applications by Feb. 29 to Search Committee, 180 Riverton Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2L 2E8; 204-667-8210; fax 204-661-5091; email mbcis@mbnet.mb.ca

- **Discipleship Ministries** seeks ***associate director*** for internships and leadership training, beginning July 2000. Design and develop new frameworks for learning in short-term missions. Short-term, cross-cultural mission experience preferred.

  Contact Keith Blank, P.O. Box 628, Salunga, PA 17538; 717-898-2251; email keithb@emm.org

- **Called to ministry?** Swamp Mennonite Church in rural southeastern Pennsylvania, one hour north of Philadelphia, seeking full-time ***associate pastor of youth ministries***. Utilize your gifts in our Anabaptist community.

  Send resume to Swamp Mennonite Church, attn. Search Committee, 2125 Rosedale Road, Quakertown, PA 18951; email swamppb@fast.net

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, Reinholds, Pa., seeks a full-time ***youth/associate pastor***. Youth work and preaching experience a plus; should have general agreement with Anabaptist teachings and a strong evangelically-based faith commitment.

  Inquiries/resumes to Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 341, Reinholds, PA 17569; 717-336-6130; email emmanuelmc@desupernet.net

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa. (200 students, K-8) is searching for a qualified ***administrator/principal*** beginning June 1, 2000. Candidates shall have the necessary educational credentials and share our commitment to Christian education based on Christian principles from the Anabaptist perspective. WFCS is in its 59th year and is affiliated with the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

  Send resume to WFCS, Attn. Search Committee, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310.

- **Children's Aid Society**, a nonprofit agency serving children and families, seeks ***coordinator of special events and marketing***. Conducts fund-raising activities, presentations, etc. Bachelor's degree in field of human relations/human services preferable with three years exp. in FR/marketing. Extensive exp. in conducting special events, public speaking, etc. may be substituted for degree. Flexibility necessary; evening and weekend work required. Computer literacy and ability to produce one's own corres. necessary.

  Send cover ltr., resume and three prof. references to Executive Director, Children's Aid Society, 2886 Carlisle Pike, New Oxford, PA 17350.

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- **Harmonies Workshop**, a music organization near Lancaster, Pa., seeks ***administrative assistant*** for 6 to 9 hours per week. Compensation scaled to skills and experience you bring. For information call 717-656-2749 or email Glenn Lehman at office@harmonies.org or see www.harmonies.org.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat**, Pocono Mountains (Pa.), a multifaceted Christian camping ministry serving over 20,000 guests annually, seeks ***director of operations***, a ministry-minded individual gifted in personnel management and organization. Ensures a positive guest experience by overseeing housekeeping, food service, and building and grounds managers, coordinates major projects and oversees operational spending. Experience in Christian camping/conference ministry a plus. Must be sympathetic to Mennonite expression of faith. Salary and benefits package. Optional on-campus housing.

  Send resume to Executive Director, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; fax 570-595-0328; email retreat@enter.net

- **Bluffton College** religion department seeks applicants for tenure-track position beginning fall 2000. Ph.D. required with specialization in ***Old or New Testament*** (ABD considered). Teach introductory and advanced biblical studies courses in an expanding department. Strong commitment to teaching excellence and serious scholarship expected. Rank/salary commensurate with background and experience within the college pay scale. For more information see http://www.bluffton.edu. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Joetta Schlabach, special assistant to the dean, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Wanted: *Energetic person*** needed to give vision for development and funding of the newly forming Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA. This full-time executive position will be located in Elkhart, Ind. Key qualifications include commitment to Mennonite beliefs and practice and an active member of the church; bachelor's degree in marketing or business; at least three years experience in a related field; proven communication skills. Applicants for this position should be able to make quick transitions, be well acquainted with the church and be eager to be part of the transformation of the new Mennonite Church USA. Women and people of color are especially encouraged to apply.

  Send resumes and inquiries to George Stoltzfus, general secretary, Mennonite Church USA, 421 S. 2nd St. Suite 600, Elkhart, IN 46516; geobs@juno.com

- **Western Mennonite School** has the following openings:

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  Fall 2000: Music director, director of choral and instrumental programs, grades 7-12; choral program includes three choirs, annual tour, concerts and local programs. Also desire leadership and development of instrumental program. ***Boys resident director,*** full-time 10-month salaried position; duties include counseling, planning and supervising dorm activities and oversight of assistant resident director. ***Girls volleyball coach,*** head varsity and JV positions.

  Contact Eric Martin, principal, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***education generalist***. Full-time tenure-track position. Doctorate (or ABD) in education preferred with a minimum of three years successful teaching experience in K-12. Competency in at least one of three areas: secondary education, special education or early childhood education. Teach education courses, supervise student teachers and be involved in curriculum development for program redesign. Goshen College is a four-year liberal arts institution dedicated to the development of informed, articulate, sensitive, responsible Christians. More than 1,000 students are enrolled in campus and international programs. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

  Please send letter of application, curriculum vita and three letters of professional reference to Paul A. Keim, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at www.Goshen.edu under "job postings." Review of applications will begin by Feb. 15 or until position is filled.

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You can't make war and grow food at the same time. Money spent to buy guns can't be used to buy hoes. A family can't plant their garden and run for their lives at the same time. In the words of Philippine peasant leader, Jaime Tadeo, the choice is "Farms, not arms."

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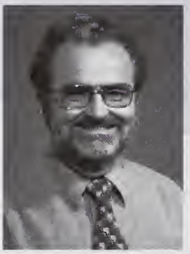

J. Lorne Peachey

We Mennonites realize how far we fall short, how much we need help in being more faithful. That may be the greatest of all reasons to be optimistic.

We may be pretty good, but we want to get better

As one constantly classified an incurable optimist, I've learned to double-check myself any time I get enthusiastic about something. Even so, I found myself growing even more positive about the church and its future when I read the results of the congregational study, "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church." I got my first look at these at a consultation Jan. 28-29 of some 80 conference and denominational leaders from across the United States and Canada (see story page 8).

On top of my list of what to be optimistic about is the response itself. Some 487 groups in 327 congregations took part; that's one-fourth of those likely to make up the new Mennonite Church. Close to 33 percent of our total membership is in those congregations, according to J. Ron Byler of the Mennonite Church USA staff and coordinator of the study. Quite impressive, considering the fact the study took six weeks, the questions were open-ended and this is supposed to be a day when denominations count for little.

The responses did not come from denominational, conference or congregational leaders. They came from Sunday school classes, Bible study groups, even entire congregations. My congregation, for example, not only had six worship services built around the study, but all our adult and youth Sunday school classes discussed the questions. We sent in five single-spaced pages of answers.

So did scores of other congregations—and more. Erick Sawatzky, a professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary who directed eight students in compiling the responses, told the consultation that analyzing answers and discovering trends was a difficult task. But in the complexity Sawatzky also found reason for optimism. "That not only says that we have many ideas," he commented, "but it reflects … our belief that being a Christian disciple is not a simple matter—it is our whole life."

In those complex answers, we Mennonites said we see ourselves as caring communities attempting to reach out in mission. We do that both in proclamation and in service. "We are a people who follow Jesus," Byler said in his summary. "Our people understand the Anabaptist distinctive of 'walking the talk.' "

This is not to say that everything is as it should be. Stanley Green, Elkhart, Ind., one of seven who studied in-depth some of the responses, noted they came mostly from rural, white congregations made up of people who grew up Mennonite. Another who studied some responses, Jonathan Larson, Atlanta, lamented the absence of those "on the margins of Mennonite life: young people, struggling urban and minority fellowships and, surprisingly, the charismatics."

But we want to do better. Larson also found that the church "has a great aspiration to venture beyond itself in mission." He noted an outward look in almost all the responses he read. As a church we want to be more inclusive and inviting, and we are looking to denominational structures to help us be so.

There was also a strong call from study participants to be a united church. At least a third see unity as a sign that we are part of the reign of God. "Our congregations want to move forward faithfully together as a united church," Byler told consultation participants.

One must, of course, be careful in using statistics such as these, particularly from answers to open-ended questions sent in on a voluntary basis. There is always the temptation to make them say what you want them to say. "Figures don't lie, but liars will figure" is a quip any researcher does well to memorize.

But for all the difficulties connected with this study, there is reason for hope. As Mennonites, we continue to believe in those values to which Jesus has called us: peacemaking, service, discipleship, love in action. "The new [church] we are becoming is definitely Mennonite," Sue Clemmer Steiner, Waterloo, Ont., said in her analysis of the results.

We also want to be communities of grace, joy and peace. We want to share what is meaningful in our lives—a relationship with God through Jesus Christ—with a desperately needy world. But we also realize how far we fall short of those goals. We know we need help in being more faithful. As Sawatzky put it last week: "We are pretty good but want to get better."

That may be the greatest of all reasons to be optimistic.—*jlp*

the Mennonite
February 15, 2000

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the gift of grandparenting

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Gardening tips

I had to chuckle when I read that 82 percent of all church plants die before they are a year old (Wider World, Feb. 1). My first thought was about the green variety of plants, and I began to wonder what makes a green plant thrive. I came up with a few things that actually might be applicable to a church plant.

1. Plants need light to get energy. Light for a church plant comes from the revelation of God's Light. The understanding of what a church is being called to do energizes a congregation and can give it life.

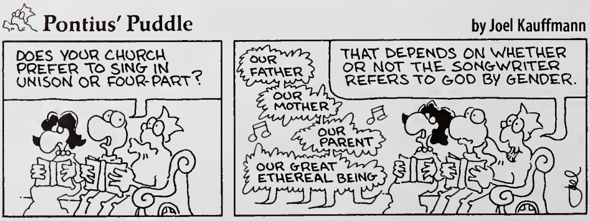
2. Plants need to be watered on a regular basis. Water is the most basic of all the nutrients. Every living thing needs water. What is the most basic ingredient for a living church? Is it prayer? Is it fellowship? Is it encouragement? Is it love? Children denied love in their early days never thrive.

3. Plants need occasional bursts of fertilizer. A church needs to rejoice at the gifts that people bring to it: a new way of understanding, an idea for worship, a contagious enthusiasm for outreach. These gifts come from God, and they provide the extra nutrients that can make a difference in the quality of church life.

4. Plants need attention. Churches need to pay attention to the people that they serve. Do they need the dust wiped from their leaves? Do they need to be trimmed back so the air and the light can reach them better? Do they need repotting to energize their future? Do they need a kind word? You can water a plant for weeks, but if you never remove the dried leaves or spray for spider mites, you are not being a good caretaker. Certainly paternalism isn't the goal. Facilitator is more the story here. A church can offer people opportunities to look at their own spiritual needs more clearly and realistically.

If 82 percent of the plants in my house died each year, I think I'd be very concerned. I would know that I was doing something fundamentally wrong, and I would seek help. I'm sure others could think of more ways that church plants of the green variety have similar needs as the church plants of the congregational variety.—*Pat Gingrich, Iowa City, Iowa*

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann


DOES YOUR CHURCH PREFER TO SING IN UNISON OR FOUR-PART?
OUR FATHER
OUR MOTHER
OUR PARENT
OUR GREAT ETHEREAL BEING
THAT DEPENDS ON WHETHER OR NOT THE SONGWRITER REFERS TO GOD BY GENDER.

A question of abandonment

Rich Preheim's editorial "An Epidemic of Abandonment" (Jan. 25) is emblematic of why *The Mennonite* is a difficult sell in many Mennonite congregations. Preheim indicts "an epidemic of congregations" for "relinquishing their God-given responsibilities to advance the kingdom." Whenever I hear that from churchwide bodies lambasting congregations, I think of the guy who sawed off the limb he was sitting on. As a pastor, I wonder who has abandoned whom? I invite Preheim to get out into dozens of congregations that do vigorous, compassionate kingdom work in their local communities and who share generously—personnel and dollars—with churchwide agencies that stay connected with their constituencies. A more apt title might have been "An Epidemic of Misunderstanding."—*Mark R. Wenger, Waynesboro, Va.*

Just love

When I first read Patricia Lehman McFarlane's article ("The Call to Courage," Jan. 11), I thought that it was overly critical. But as I thought more about it, I realized that such criticism is, in fact, honest and valid. Those who are in high positions must know where they are going wrong. If people do not know that they are acting in ignorance, then they will continue to do so. In Mennonite publications, there is much written about the good things that are happening. However, our wrongs do not get addressed as often. We need someone to be up-front and honest, and hopefully McFarlane's article will make some major changes in the church.

There is one reservation that I have, however. While an all-white executive group raises some warning flags, it is not the sign of institutional racism. The practice of viewing a picture of the executives of a Mennonite institution is much like judging a book by its cover. How does one know what is inside the book? Similarly, how can you know what happens inside the institution? To really know, it would be good to ask people honestly what the hiring and promoting practices are of the group. Ask people in the institution if they have ever been discriminated against in any way. Ask the executives if they practice racism when hiring

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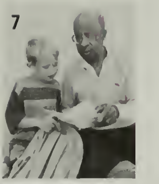
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y readers say

and promoting.

1 Timothy 5:21 tells us "to do nothing out of favoritism." Being hired and promoted should absolutely not depend on one's connections in the church. That is exclusionary of "nonethnic" Mennonites. Obviously, there is institutional racism in the Mennonite church, and that needs to end. Our Savior, whom we look to follow, never says who to love but says just to love.—*Rich Lindberg, Spring City, Pa.*

Proclaiming Jubilee

"Spirit of Jubilee Proclaimed in Capital" (Jan. 11) describes a protest outside International Monetary Fund (IMF) headquarters in Washington, D.C., concerning international debts that are strangling the economic life of Third-World countries. Such protesters are doing a mighty work of important social justice. However, the article misses three key points.

1. Much of this financial/economic crisis is the result of piling debt on debt by capitalizing interest payments. The IMF, a notably reactionary institution, has seriously exacerbated the crisis by attempting to clone Wall Street around the world.

2. The United States has become the greatest debtor nation in the history of the world and is providing stimulus to the global economy by going deeper into debt as it buys goods from others.

3. The biblical Jubilee of Leviticus calls for a year every 50 years when slaves are set free and debts are canceled. That is the whole Jubilee equation. The United States, like Sudan, has legalized slavery (see the 13th amendment to the U.S. Constitution). But no one is calling to free the slaves or for the abolition of legalized slavery. Half the biblical Jubilee equation has been lost somewhere.—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

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Bedside

by John Grey

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the behavior of black bears,
so go the invisible
currents of your body.
You sputter like
a campfire in the dark
or grind your teeth so loud,
I fear the earth is breaking,
or you sleep twelve hours
at a time,
worn down by your former beauty
or the creatures you once weaned
who breed beneath you,
behind your back.
We lose you
and we lose ourselves,
an unremembered name
setting so much in motion,
identity less tangible,
shadows folding like
beds into tables.
Each moment must exert its friction.
It can live without form
but must not lose a drop of substance.
But as it moves mysteriously
this way or that,
how can we know
how much of it is
places where you once lived,
how much of it
that unforced turn
toward the light.
Joints withered,
bone loosened like icebergs,
your body parts almost float,
slipping this way and that,
sometimes migrating south,
others, flying into the
headwind of a future
that doesn't want you whole,
will only accept you as fragments,
as something it can toss around,
and I pray, blow enough my way.

John Grey lives in Providence, R.I.

Lora Jost

The gift of grandparenting

by Victor Stoltzfus

New grandparents often tell me they underestimated the joy and responsibility of their new relationship. It is not only the wonder of holding a baby that carries our genes. It is also the new bond to their children who have suddenly become parents. There is often a special gratitude born of the realization that one time, long ago, their mother and father did all that for them.

Sixty-five years ago my grandparents welcomed me to a home they shared with my parents. I wonder: Did they respond to me like I respond to my grandchildren? I remember my grandmother's proverbs and Bible verses, especially the oft-repeated, "Why spend money on that which is not bread?" I remember the time my grandfather made the mistake of turning his back on a billy goat he had been teasing. He was sore for a week. I remember how my grandparents read books to me until their throats were dry during my childhood illnesses. Today, many children have only one parent. How grateful I am to have had two parents and two grandparents amid the turkeys, chickens, plants and weeds of our small truck farm.

Much of the Hebrew and Christian faith consists of words and rituals of remembering. Grandparents who make the past attractive and remembering important encourage a rooted faith.

Today three-generation households are rare. We have higher divorce rates and often many miles between grandparents and grandchildren. However, the role of the grandparents survives and often thrives in the modern world. Our role is secondary but still significant. We can find ways to be supportive without interfering.

One summer five grandchildren and one or more parents were in our home, some for three weeks, others for eight weeks. Our time together was delightful. Grandparents can take a young child from boredom to intense pleasure in minutes. The key is sustained, undivided adult attention to an activity that engages their imagination.

Young children are delighted by a strong push on a 30-foot tire swing, picking cherry tomatoes, or visiting a farm and seeing new kittens. It is surprising how much delight children find in working with an adult who instructs and praises for a job well done. It takes more time, but a small child can drop tulip bulbs into the hole. They can turn Grandma's food grinder and squeeze out applesauce. At times the delight comes when we step aside and watch them carry out a project such as building a hospital for sick animals. Some adults would look with a jaundiced eye and call the whole effort a mess. For the child, it is a beautiful, tangible expression of their care for birds, squirrels or any sick or injured animals.

God who delights: Experiences of human delight lay the groundwork for relating to the God of the Bible. "The Lord delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love" (Psalm 147:11). Children need experiences of human delight if they are to ever think of a God who is delighted with them. Parents necessarily teach a lot of "ought," "must" and "should" to move children toward adulthood. But these necessary disciplines take on a different color and texture if we believe the awesome God who commands is also the One who delights in us and invites us to delight in him.

It isn't easy to grow up. Little ones are often fearful. Grandparents can reassure that the dark is friendly space. We tell them that the loud train will not leave the tracks and run over them. It is safe to go to children's time in an unfamiliar church. They can learn to swim. Children need assurance that all will be well the first day of school and that a scratched knee will heal. A broken toy need not be a permanent loss. Grandpa has glue.

Public shaming is a real fear. Competitive children hate to lose a foot race or a word game. They need reassurance that losing a contest is not a stain for life. And, with time, they will learn that no one wins every contest. Someone out there is faster or smarter or both. A frequent message to adults in the Bible is, "Fear not." Overcoming fear as a child is a necessary step to coping with adolescent and adult fears later on. Grandparents can help a frightened child shrink threats down to a manageable size.

Doubts sometimes haunt children. As we walked down the street, my 5-year-old grandchild asked, out of the blue, "Do you believe in God?" I was tempted to say too much. I restrained myself. "Yes, I do believe in God. I believe because the Bible teaches about God, because of the wonder of nature and God's love shown by my parents and church people." That was enough. She said little in response,

but I hope my few words were reassuring at the time and perhaps food for thought later on.

We live in a world where both children and adults value many tangible things. It is no wonder children sometimes doubt a God who is silent and invisible. Grandparents can provide safe space for the doubts children might be ashamed to express to parents and other adults.

Grandparents tell the stories that root children in family history. I am repeatedly asked for stories about when I was a little boy. Children must deal with rapid changes at home, at school and even inside their developing bodies. It is reassuring to know that they are part of a larger, continuing story. In the future, our furniture, our photos and our tombstones will be their link to family history. For now, we have a brief time to make and share memories. Much of the Hebrew and Christian faith consists of words and rituals of remembering. Grandparents who make the past attractive and remembering important encourage a rooted faith.

Gift of wonder: Grandchildren also help grandparents. Anyone who has ever taken an unhurried walk with a curious child will see the world in a new way. Trees have leaves, climbing limbs and bark with texture. Daddy longlegs can climb up glass, morning dew sparkles, and bossy jays chase other birds away from the feeder. Nature is wondrous to a child. Grandchildren share their gift of wonder with us. The pace of a child's walk slows us down so that we observe things we would ordinarily miss.

"Grandma (or Grandpa), I love you." The affection of a grandchild is different from the routine good wishes we receive from other adults. It comes with sparkling eyes and a lilt in the voice. It is often spontaneous, expressed in a time and place where we did not expect it. Some of the most formal, even formidable adults I have ever met go into emotional meltdown when a grandchild says, "I love you."

Grandchildren, even at a tender age, mirror back bits of ourselves. I wish it were only the most admirable aspects of our lives, but, alas, the mirror is honest. We don't do a lot of psychological or physical changing in the later decades of our lives. Grandchildren make a hopeful new beginning. Working with and alongside parents, we may be able to interpret the inherited strengths and weaknesses of our grandchildren in a helpful manner.

Grandchildren strengthen our connections to the larger web of life. We meet their friends at a birthday party, and we are invited to Grandparents Day at school. When grandchildren are in tow, we have a reason to engage in brief conversations with other grandparents who are strangers in a grocery store. Some grandparents travel 1,000 miles or more for the service of infant dedication.

Grandchildren connect us to guilt-free leisure. Grandchildren connect us to our deeper, reflective selves.

But most important of all, we relate in new, creative ways to the grandchildren's parents. Today's two-career parents, also involved in church and civic life, are busy people. Grandparents can clean, shop and provide emotional support when a child is born. We can also provide time for a parents' night out or even a vacation when parental batteries run low.

Folks in the adult world are especially quick to ask us retired people if we are busy. Grandchildren connect us to guilt-free leisure. Grandchildren connect us to our deeper, reflective selves.

Grandparents, parents and grandchildren have much to offer each other. Even when grandparents joke about enjoying the taillights as much as the headlights of their children's cars, they know and feel a deeper truth. We may get tired at night when the house is filled with little people, but it is one of the most rewarding forms of fatigue we will ever know.

Victor Stoltzfus, Goshen, Ind., is the retired president of Goshen College and is now active in writing, speaking and consulting.

The sky is falling!

Harold M. Lambert

Christ calls us to be alert and prepared, to endure to the end.

by Ann Showalter

> But about that day or hour no one knows, neither the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Beware, keep alert; for you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man going on a journey, when he leaves home and puts his slaves in charge, each with his work, and commands the doorkeeper to be on the watch. Therefore, keep awake—for you do not know when the master of the house will come, in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or at dawn, or else he may find you asleep when he comes suddenly. And what I say to you I say to all: Keep awake.
>
> —*Mark 13:32-37*

Chicken Little was terribly frightened when an acorn fell on her head as she scratched in the leaves under an oak tree. "Oh, the sky is falling! The sky is falling! I must tell the king," she cried. Chickens scare easily. Without a moment's hesitation Chicken Little cackled and ran. She thought she was headed in the right direction by going straight to the top—to the king himself. However, Chicken Little had two major problems. She misinterpreted what had happened, and she did not recognize the fox as dangerous when she met him face to face. Chicken Little and all the fowl that followed her met an untimely death, preoccupied with their fear that the sky was falling.

We live in a time when people often cry, "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" Much fear is aroused by speculation about the end of the world and living in the last days. It is easy to become fearful and lose perspective if we let ourselves get caught up in all the hype.

Mark 13:32-37 has important words for us today (see box at left). Four times in six verses, Jesus calls us to be alert and keep awake as we await God's final action in history. Three times in those verses we are told that no human being will know when the time is to come. Matthew agrees with Mark. No one knows the day or hour. Luke 21:8 warns: "Beware that you are not led astray; for many will come in my name and say, 'I am he!' and, 'The time is near!' Do not go after them." In 21:34,36 Jesus says, "Be on guard," and, "Be alert at all times." In Acts 1:6-7, just before Jesus is taken from their sight, the disciples ask once more, " 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' [Jesus] replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority.' " In spite of all these warnings, there are people who insist on predicting the time, even the dates of Christ's return. No one has been correct—ever. At each failure many of these predictors go back and rework the numbers and predict a later date. Beware.

As Christians we are called to be watchful and to be prepared at all times. We are called to be discerning and on guard lest we be taken by surprise. The return of Jesus Christ is not in question. What is in question is the speculation about how and when Jesus will return. How will he come? In a moment, as the lightning that flashes from east to west. How will he come? In power and great glory. When will he come? If we become complacent and lose heart or become careless about our relationship with God, Christ will come when we least expect him.

In his book *The Alpha and the Omega*, Paul Erb introduces us to the word "parousia," which means a second "arrival." In the New Testament, parousia is always used in reference to Jesus coming in glory. His first coming can hardly be described as "arriving in great power and glory." Hebrews 9:28 reads, "Christ … will appear a second time, not to deal with sin, but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him." We must be alert and prepared, waiting with eagerness.

The life and ministry of Jesus, including his death, resurrection, ascension and the coming of the Holy Spirit, ushered in a new age. His coming ushered in the last days. The church has been living in the last days from the beginning. Yet the last day is still to come. Jesus came with the message, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." His ministry from beginning to end embodied what it means for God to reign supreme in a human being. Jesus called into God's kingdom all who were willing to embody the reign of God in their life. His call is the same today.

The new age Jesus inaugurated was eschatological—that is, the nature and the quality of kingdom life were already present in the earthly life of Jesus. Although limited and faulty, the nature and quality of life in the kingdom has been present in his faithful followers in the past and continues to be present in the faithful today. Yet the kingdom in its fullness is still to come. Paul's writings refer to the presence of the Holy Spirit as the down payment or the guarantee that the fullness of the kingdom will surely come.

It is like a couple who gets married. Although they are married from the day of the wedding, the fullness of the marriage is not realized until one or the other draws the last breath. Only then is that marriage completed—fully realized. That is true whether the marriage was disappointing and painful or loving and satisfying or, what is more likely, a combination of both. In like manner the church can be living in the last days since its birth. God's purpose for and in humanity is not yet fully realized.

The early church waited with eager, intense expectation for the early return of Jesus. They expected Jesus to return at any moment. So must we. Early in the second century, Ignatius of Antioch, a bishop of the church, said, "The last times are upon us." Only gradually did the church realize that God's time might be different from time as humans count it. The author of 2 Peter warns Christians that scoffers say: "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since our ancestors died, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation!" The author answers, "The Lord is not slow about his promise, as some think of slowness, but is patient with you, not wanting any to perish, but all to come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:4,9).

Time as hours, days, weeks and years is a human concept and experience. God's time is like past, present and future all rolled into one. The English language has only one word for time while Greek, the language of the New Testament, has a variety of words to express the experience of time. One is "chronos"—time as calculated by humans, calendar time. Another is "kairos," which has to do with the quality, goal and purpose of time. The new age Jesus inaugurated was kairos time. It was and continues to be a time of crisis and opportunity. Kairos is decision-making time. When the purposes of God for the universe are fully realized, the end will come. Kairos is not measured by days and years but by quality and fulfillment of purpose. In light of kairos, it is difficult to understand why anyone would try to calculate the date for the parousia, the Second Advent of Christ.

The whole concept of a second coming of Christ appears again and again in the New Testament. It is the source of great hope and comfort to all who eagerly await his coming. Let us not start running in fear with every cry of, "The sky is falling! The sky is falling!" Instead Christ calls us to be alert and prepared, to endure to the end.

Ann Showalter is interim pastor at Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

MENNOS AT WORK

Editors' note: *As Mennonites, we believe that "in all areas of life, we are called to be Jesus' disciples" (Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, Article 17).* The Mennonite *plans to focus on Mennonites' involvement in various occupations and how they exercise their faith in their work. This feature will run approximately once per month. We invite others to answer the questions on this form. Send your responses and a photo of yourself to Gordon Houser,* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Ruth Stoltzfus Jost, Columbus, Ohio

Congregation: Columbus Mennonite Church

Occupation: lawyer

Years in occupation: 10

Why I do what I do: I became a poverty lawyer in 1977, just as legal services for the poor in noncriminal matters were finally being extended to every county in the United States. Later came restrictions, budget cuts and reversals as Congress was pressured to tie the hands of energetic advocates who were winning basic rights for their clients in courts of law. At that time in Rockingham County, Va., prisoners were being held in small cells in the county jail for up to a year with less space than that required for dog kennels. My office filed a case that effected the right to physical exercise for prisoners. Another case established the right of all tenants to avoid eviction where the landlord is seriously at fault. Even the mundane cases were rewarding because I could give legal advice and help to people who never had a lawyer before.

The role of faith in what I do: While poverty law practice is not a uniquely Christian profession, it is an excellent way to stand with the poor. For me, poverty law became a vantage point from which to take the measure of our society and its treatment of the substantial underclass. It has helped me look at public policies from immigration to food stamps to the earned income tax credit through the eyes of the poors' well-being instead of my own, a consequence surely God intends.

Currently Ruth is not practicing law but is soliciting names for the Mennonite Lawyers Directory.

Damascus Road goal to dismantle racism

About 350 trained to bring about structural change

AKRON, Pa.—The road to Damascus was an eye-opener for Saul; confronted by Jesus, he saw his own blindness. Across the Mennonite church today, people describe similar experiences as they take part in the Damascus Road anti-racism training, a program of Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

"Going through the training was a kind of conversion for me," says Everett Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM) in Elkhart, Ind.

He saw in a new way how church structures and institutions limit people of color. "The scales on my eyes continue to fall off," Thomas says.

"It's really a spiritual battle," says Jeff Hackman, a teacher at Western Mennonite High School in Salem, Ore. "Realizing racism is rooted in spiritual conflict makes people take it more seriously."

From Damascus Road's beginnings in March 1995 at a Chicago conference, desire for change has spread across churches. About 350 people from colleges, churches, church conferences and church organizations have taken part in anti-racism training and started teams working for long-term change. More than 40 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ institutions now have Damascus Road teams.

But the program's effect has gone beyond the church. Thomas' membership on the Goshen, Ind., city council led to anti-racism training for city department heads. Anti-racism training had a major impact on discussions of race in the workplace for participant Rachel Yoder of Fort Wayne, Ind.

"The issue is who's in control," she says. "Whites need to share power in planning, not only ask people of color to follow existing patterns."

Damascus Road has led Franconia Conference, as part of a long-term restructuring project, in "rebuilding our core documents, constitution and bylaws to include anti-racism," says Sharon Williams, a conference staff person and Damascus Road team member.

"Unlike many programs that call for grassroots change, Damascus Road is encouraging church institutions to change from the top down," she says.

MCC photo by Conrad Moore

While Rose Widmer of Goshen, Ind., listens, Barbara Abebe, also of Goshen, makes a point during a Damascus Road training session in Goshen last October. About 350 people have gone through the training since the program started in 1995.

MBCM has asked questions about "virtually every program, ministry or project we provide, to see if those are serving only mainstream churches or serving churches of many cultures and ethnicities," Thomas says.

Today MBCM helps congregations understand cross-cultural evangelism, tailors worship resources to serve many cultural traditions, and works with ministerial groups from various ethnic backgrounds to better serve them with pastor placements.

With the creation of a new Mennonite Church, "the irony is that [MBCM] will disappear within a couple years," Thomas says. But he believes the focus on anti-racism at this time is providential for the church. "As we create plans for how church agencies will work, foundational to all is the work of dismantling racism," Thomas says.

He credits Damascus Road for the requirement that the Mennonite Church USA executive board have at least 20 percent people of color.

"The knowledge is here, the Scriptures are there," says Zenebe Abebe, coordinator of Goshen (Ind.) College's Damascus Road teams. "We can combine that force to make this our mission for peace and justice in the absence of war. This is a tremendous opportunity for the Mennonite church."—*Ardell Stauffer for MCC News Service*

King Arthur focus of peace lecture

It has been 1,400 years since Camelot. But the way King Arthur and his knights viewed violence and justified war are still with us, says Lisa Robeson, Bluffton (Ohio) College English professor.

"Those [concepts] are still evident in depictions of American police and soldiers in popular films, contemporary novels and the rhetoric of the real-life wars of today," she says.

Robeson has been selected as the 24th annual C. Henry Smith Peace Lecturer. She will present "Selling 'Mischievous War' at the Price of Peace: Lessons in the Rhetoric of War and Peace from King Arthur's Knights" on Feb. 15 at Bluffton College and Feb. 16 at Goshen (Ind.) College.

The Smith Peace Lecture is sponsored jointly by Bluffton and Goshen. Smith served as dean at Goshen from 1908 to 1913, then was professor of history and social sciences at Bluffton until 1946.

Sarona

Global Investment Fund

Putting your money to work for the poor ...

What is the Sarona Global Investment Fund?

The Sarona Global Investment Fund is a social investment fund with an aggressive focus on ventures that strengthen the economic prospects of the poor in low income countries. The Fund, which is a program of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), takes its name from MEDA's very first project — lending money to Mennonite refugees in Paraguay in 1953 to help them set up a dairy. Like many poor people today, one of the chief obstacles facing those Mennonite refugees was lack of capital; the MEDA loan permitted them to set up the dairy, which they named "Sarona" after the lush, fertile plain of Sharon ("Saron" in German) in Old Testament Palestine. By choosing that name they were expressing the hope that the dairy, like the plain of old, would also prove to be successful. Their hopes were realized — the dairy brought many economic improvements to the refugees, and the country at large. It still exists today. The Sarona Global Investment Fund will build on the success of the original dairy by continuing to provide capital to benefit the poor. As in 1953, one of the main obstacles which prevents low income people from escaping poverty is lack of access to capital — because of a lack of collateral, and because local banks frequently won't loan money to poor people. This leaves them with no options other than loan sharks, who charge high interest rates, leading to further impoverishment.

This is where Sarona comes in. By providing loans to local **microcredit lending institutions**, Sarona enables poor people to buy new machinery, increase inventory, do advertising, market their goods, buy raw materials or improve their businesses in other ways. At the same time, Sarona supports programs which allow clients to obtain business training in such things as marketing, bookkeeping and other business practices (some of these programs are tied to loans). Program clients who successfully pay back their first small loans become eligible for larger loans.

Sarona's services aren't limited to providing loans to microcredit lending institutions. Sarona also invests in social ventures which benefit the poor. These include **agricultural cooperatives**, which use the money to buy seed and fertilizer to grow crops or to purchase produce from members for re-sale; **fair trade companies**, which purchase products from local producers at just prices; and new enterprises, which need startup capital in order to provide a local market for small agricultural producers' products.

Tanzania: Affordable credit helps business grow

It pays to listen to customers, says Tanzanian restaurateur Mselem Ally.

Some customers who were chowing down a lunch of fish and ugali (a thick corn porridge) happened to be clients of MEDA's micro-enterprise program. They explained how they had been able to borrow money at affordable rates to expand their own small businesses.

Ally took note and decided to contact MEDA himself. Before long he qualified for a loan of $900 U.S. Even though he had been in the restaurant business for nine years, he was able to utilize the loan to boost trade to a higher level.

NAWA PAPA
ANDAZI
KITUMBUA
SLESI KAVU
SLESI SIAGI
TAMBI
SUPU
NDIZI
PILAU
UGALI NYAMA
WALI NYAMA
" MCHICHA
" BAMIA
" MCHUZI PAPA
" MAHARAGE
" NJEGERE
" SAMAKI
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Mselem Ally

He and his wife and six children, along with six employees, serve a hundred customers a day. Their bustling restaurant is open from seven a.m. to three p.m. For breakfast they serve tea, a hearty "morning soup" and beans. Later in the day the menu broadens to include Indian food, rice, fish and meat, and of course the popular ugali.

MEDA's loan enabled Ally to enjoy the benefits of wholesale. He now was able to buy flour, rice and soda in large enough amounts to qualify for bulk discounts. Small quantities of dried fish, often used in Tanzanian cooking, cost about $4 per kilo, twice the wholesale price. He could also afford to build a storage room to hold these additional supplies.

Has the loan made a difference to the bottom line? Ally says that before he received the loan he was earning about $30 U.S. a day. Now, thanks to the expansion, he has increased his profit by 50 percent.

This would not have been possible without access to affordable credit. "It's not easy to get credit elsewhere," he says.

After he's paid off this loan, Ally hopes to qualify for a larger loan that will enable him to open a second restaurant in another area where he can be open longer. "A bigger loan would allow me to buy everything wholesale," he says.

His long-term dream is to build a thriving family business that he will be able to turn over to his children.

By investing in MEDA's Tanzania micro-credit program, Sarona has helped Mselem Ally and others achieve economic self-sufficiency.

“It just felt right”

Martin Edmonds

Martin Edmonds and his wife Janet McPharlin reflect carefully on their lifestyle and how much money they spend. “We need to continue challenging ourselves toward a simpler lifestyle or else our spending creeps upwards to the amount of money we are making.”

Martin and Janet try to predict how much money they will need in the future and challenge themselves to give the rest away. However, they choose to hang on to some money for their family's future needs, including retirement.

Explains Martin, “Our money is an extension of ourselves and so we want it to be used in a way that is consistent with our values. Through the Mennonite Savings and Credit Union, we have been able to put part of our savings to good use within our local Mennonite community. We also want to find ways to make our savings available for worthwhile causes in other countries and to non-Mennonites.”

As a result, Martin and Janet chose to invest in the Sarona Global Investment Fund. “I heard about the Grameen Bank and was excited about it.” says Martin. “When I heard that a Mennonite organization was doing similar work, it just felt right.” As well as making a modest financial return, Martin appreciates that the Fund makes the money available for worthwhile initiatives while allowing him to maintain ongoing stewardship over those dollars.

How is the Money Invested?

Investment opportunities are thoroughly reviewed to see how much difference they will really make to low income communities. Simply avoiding negative effects is not good enough — our investments must actively improve the economic and social health of the world's poor.
The Sarona Fund reviews each investment opportunity to determine how it will effect low-income individuals, families and communities. To qualify for investment, Sarona must be satisfied that the venture will better the lives of the members of the low-income community in which it resides, or which it serves. In other words, Sarona wants to see benefits for all stakeholders of an enterprise. This includes shareholders, employees, suppliers, customers and the affected community.

The Sarona Global Investment Fund favours enterprises which:

- Have a mission and/or track record of providing economic and/or social benefit to the poor.
- Practise ethical employment practises, including employee participation in ownership and governance. In the case of not-for-profit organizations, the Sarona Fund will favour those enterprises with community-based directorship.
- Promote sound environmental practises and products.
- Promote racial and gender diversity.

Enterprises which The Sarona Fund will not invest in include:

- The nuclear industry
- Alcohol or tobacco production
- The manufacture of armaments
- Pornography

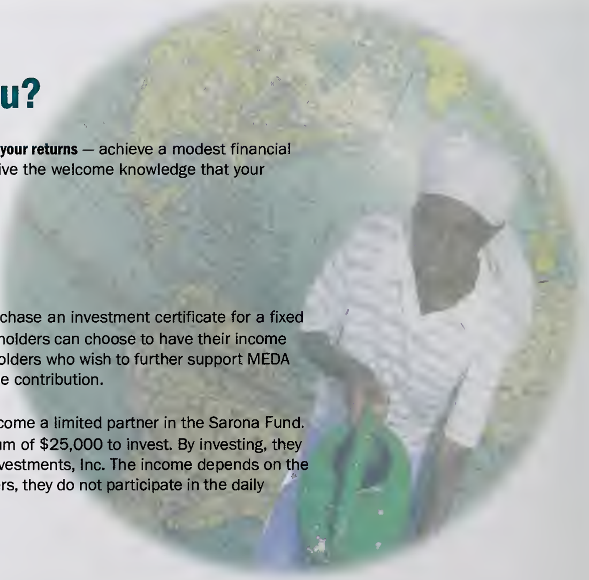
Lizet Huanca proudly shows off jeans made by her family's clothing factory. Their first MEDA loan was $400 for material; now they are looking at a $5,000 loan to buy a specialized piece of equipment so they can make more items like “hipsters” — baggy jeans which they export to Brazil.

Who Manages the Sarona Fund?

The Fund is managed by MEDA Investments, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of MEDA, a not-for-profit organization incorporated in both Canada and the USA. MEDA was founded in 1953 by a small group of Mennonite businesspersons from Canada and the U.S. to help Mennonite refugees from the former Soviet Union who were trying to establish themselves in their new country of Paraguay. MEDA's founders saw that while their immediate needs for food, shelter and clothing were provided for by charitable organizations, their long-term needs for employment and economic infrastructure were as yet unmet. This group of eight businesspersons committed themselves to each providing $5,000 as loan capital to help the refugees. Their first investment was in the Sarona Dairy Farm, in Fernheim, Paraguay. This investment allowed farmers to increase the milk production of their herds, provided jobs and, over the longer term, improved Paraguay's stock of dairy cattle. The Sarona Dairy is still in operation today.

Sarona Dairy

Since those early days, MEDA has grown to become a significant non-governmental organization (NGO) specializing in microcredit and the development of small businesses in the developing world. In an average year MEDA-supported institutions loan over $6 million (U.S.) to about 8,000 poor clients in Africa, the Caribbean and Latin and South America.



Is the Sarona Fund for You?

You should consider the Sarona Fund if you want to **double your returns** — achieve a modest financial return plus a significant social return. In addition, you receive the welcome knowledge that your savings are helping to make the world a better place.

Investment Options:

Investment Certificates. One way to participate is to purchase an investment certificate for a fixed amount of time in order to earn a fixed income. Certificate holders can choose to have their income paid to them on an annual basis. Alternatively, certificate holders who wish to further support MEDA can choose to redirect their income to MEDA as a charitable contribution.

Limited Partnerships. Another way to participate is to become a limited partner in the Sarona Fund. This option is available to qualified investors with a minimum of $25,000 to invest. By investing, they become co-owners of the Sarona Fund along with MEDA Investments, Inc. The income depends on the overall performance of the fund. However, as limited partners, they do not participate in the daily operations and decision-making of the Sarona Fund.

For more information about investing in Sarona:

Toll-free: 1-877-772-7662
(1-8-TRIPLE 7-SARONA)

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E-mail: info@saronafund.com

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MEDA-supported microcredit program in Romania seeks to provide jobs, hope where both are short

CLUJ, Romania—Under communism more than a decade ago, a popular saying among Romanian workers was, "We pretend to work, and they pretend to pay us."

Everyone was guaranteed a job and couldn't be fired. But workers also couldn't earn more money for being creative or hardworking, and only Communist Party members were eligible for promotions.

Since the fall of Nicolae Ceausescu, Romania's communist dictator, in 1989, jobs and hope are in short supply. Under a free-market economy, tens of thousands of workers have lost their jobs as state-owned businesses have been closed or sold. As many as 37 percent of Romanians are impoverished. Many others are just getting by on salaries of about $100 a month—barely enough to make ends meet.

But amid all the upheaval, Romanians' ways of thinking are still rooted in the communist era. "If things are going to change in Romania, then the mentality of waiting for someone else to change things has to end," says Mano Kamaleson.

An Indian-born Californian, he is trying to effect that change. Kamaleson is director of Creditare Assistenta Pregatire Afaceri (CAPA), a Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA)-supported microcredit, consulting and business-training organization based in Cluj, in northeastern Romania.

CAPA was started by the Christian relief and development agency World Vision, which first came to Romania in the early 1990s to offer emergency assistance. Out of that work CAPA was started in 1995, and in 1997 World Vision asked MEDA to provide consulting services. MEDA has committed $147,000 for the program.

CAPA has made some 575 loans worth $3.7 million to more than 350 businesses that provide employment for more than 2,700 people in the cities of Cluj, Craiova and Iasi.

"There was so much hope when the communists were overthrown," Kamaleson says. "People thought we would get rich right away. But that wasn't realistic. First we have to wander in the wilderness, looking for the promised land."

The solution is not charity, emphasizes Romeo Vasilache, who directs CAPA's work in Iasi. "That will just replace the state with money from the West," he says.

"After the revolution 10 years ago, … we needed immediate assistance," Vasilache says. "But the next step is community development and job creation."

Ana Ichim became the first client at CAPA's Iasi branch when it opened last November. After she had lost her job when a textile factory closed in 1992, she started sewing in her home. With the profits, Ichim, who as a young girl dreamed of running a business, started a small convenience store in a garage behind her house. Her CAPA loan was for $500 to build up inventory.

"It was hard to start," Ichim says. "But now I have realized my childhood dream."

Right now, however, her dream may seem more like a nightmare. In return for working seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m., Ichim's store turns a profit of only $25 a month. Ten years ago, she and her husband, Peter, both employed at state-run factories, brought home $400 a month.

"Yes, it's hard," Ichim says. "But there is no other source of income. Plus, it's hard for everyone in Romania today."

Romanian banks will lend money to small businesses, but almost no one pursues that option. One reason is that the banks usually lend money only to those people who already have it, which eliminates most small businesses. Furthermore, loan requirements are so stringent that few qualify. Finally, most Romanians find banks to be impersonal and uncaring.

In contrast, CAPA is anxious to assist entrepreneurs who have good business plans and are willing to take initiative. "Our approach is different: It's not that you need us, so take it or leave it, but we can work together," says Cristina Plescan, a loan officer in Cluj. "We are there to work with and support clients."

Among those benefiting from CAPA are Monica and Arpad Rosias, who own a machine shop in Cluj that employs 15 full-time and 24 part-time employees. The couple has been approved for a loan to buy raw materials to fill all the contracts coming their way.

"We have to work very hard," Monica Rosias says. "But we are content. We're using our education and training and seeing our business grow.

"We're glad we learned about CAPA. It's good to know there's somewhere for small businesses like ours to go for help."

Jorin Vamos of Cluj used an $8,000 loan to purchase two delivery vans for his auto-parts business. "Now I can be more flexible," he says. "If a customer wants a part, I can deliver it, not wait until I can find a vehicle [to rent]."

Says Kamaleson: "What we're doing in Romania is changing history. … It's so encouraging to see people get a loan, to get excited, to have hope for the future."—*John Longhurst of MEDA News Service*

MEDA

It's hard. There is no other source of income.

—Ana Ichim, with her husband, Peter

MEDA

We have to work hard. But we are content.

—Monica Rosias, with her husband, Arpad

First Colombians appointed for foreign missions; family will serve in Ecuador with COM and MBM

CACHIPAY, Colombia—Cesar Moya and Patricia Urueña and their three children are bound for Quito, Ecuador, as the first international missionaries from the Mennonite Church of Colombia (IMCOL).

The husband-and-wife team, from Bogota, was commissioned Jan. 15 during IMCOL's annual assembly in Cachipay. Their assignment is through the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM). Iowa-Nebraska Conference will also have a partnership with the Moyas, providing financial, fraternal and prayer support.

In Ecuador, the Moya family will minister to indigenous groups through teaching in programs of the Ecuador Indigenous Foundation for Development. They will also relate to Anabaptist groups and other churches interested in Anabaptism.

"Cesar and Patricia have many relational and pastoral gifts," says Lawrence Greaser, interim COM-MBM Latin America director. "I am impressed with their dedication, commitment, enthusiasm and gifts."

Moya was IMCOL president from 1992 to 1994 and executive secretary from 1996 to 1999. He is trained in veterinary medicine, theology and conflict resolution and has also served as a pastor. In the past year, he has made many trips to Ecuador to teach among the indigenous groups and others interested in Anabaptism.

Urueña, a professor, holds degrees in biology, chemistry and theology. She will receive a master's degree in education this spring. She has also served as an editorial assistant in a project developing children's Sunday school materials.

GCMC-MBM photo

Twelve-year-old Daniel Moya (center) speaks during the Jan. 15 commissioning service of his family as the Mennonite Church of Colombia's (IMCOL) first international missionaries. Also pictured are (left to right) Lawrence Greaser, interim Latin America director for the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions; IMCOL president Peter Stucky; and the new mission workers: Daniel, Cesar Moya, Juan Moya, Patricia Urueña and Andrea Moya.

Greaser said IMCOL asked COM and MBM to provide administration for the Moyas' four-year assignment because the Colombian church has so many other ministries to oversee. IMCOL, with a membership of 1,000, operates a seminary, bookstore, retirement center, retreat center and several schools. The denomination also is active in church planting, publishing, social services and peace and justice ministries.—*Bethany Swope for GCMC and MBM news services*

GC worker has seen 40 years of changes

Larry Becker admits he was wrong about the new technology.

Becker, manager of information technology at General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) headquarters in Newton, Kan., helped introduce computers to the office.

"I thought word processing would be good for documents that needed a lot of changing but that [it] would never replace typewriters for doing single pages, like letters," Becker says.

Advancements in technology have been the most striking change Becker has seen in four decades as a GC employee. He celebrated his 40th anniversary on Jan. 25.

As a 19-year-old from Turpin, Okla., Becker came to GC headquarters in 1960 to do his alternative service, working in the printing and mailing department. He always thought he would return home and farm. "But there wasn't any land available, ... so I just stayed here," he says.

After four years in printing and mailing, Becker was an accountant for what is now Faith & Life Press and Bookstores before moving into his current position in the 1970s.—*GCMC News Service*

Goshen scientists sappy about spring forecast

GOSHEN, Ind.—So what if Punxsutawney Phil said winter will stick around for six more weeks? Scientists from Goshen College prefer sap over shadows to predict more accurately the arrival of spring.

While the legendary groundhog was seeing his shadow on Feb. 2, the Goshen group—called Scientists Advocating Precision, or SAP—was tapping a campus maple tree to challenge Phil's forecast.

The sap, which will be collected through Feb. 18, is the essential ingredient to a SAP-designed formula for determining strength of winter vs. strength of spring; other data will include temperature and precipitation. The sap will be weighed on a special scale, also designed by SAP, with an index to indicate spring's arrival.

SAP members are Victor Koop, psychology professor; John Ross Buschert, physics professor; Larry Yoder, biologist at the college's Merry Lea Environmental Center; and student Brandon Mottice, a junior from Louisville, Ohio.

The maple tree being used, located near the college's administration building, has been designated the official Goshen maple tree by mayor Allan Kauffman. Goshen is known as the Maple City, and the college's athletic teams are the Maple Leafs.

23,000 relief buckets to be collected for victims of Venezuela's catastrophic Dec. 15 landslides

AKRON, Pa.—Two months after landslides killed nearly 30,000 Venezuelans, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is appealing for assistance to collect 23,000 relief buckets for the survivors. The buckets, which are similar to those collected after Hurricane Mitch more than a year ago, will be sent to communities in Venezuela affected by the Dec. 15 catastrophe.

Tens of thousands of Venezuelans continue to suffer as a result of the massive flooding and landslides that wiped away entire communities and buried the homes of an estimated 300,000 people. "It looks like a giant animal scratched pieces of the mountain off and sent them into the city," says Abe Janzen, describing the scene around Caracas, the capital city.

Janzen, executive director of the MCC Alberta provincial office, visited Venezuela last month with Jose Santiago, Eastern Mennonite Missions Latin America area director, and Anthony Sanchez of MENCOLDES, the Colombian Mennonite relief and development agency. The trip came following a request for assistance by EMM-related Venezuelan churches.

Many homeless are living in temporary shelters. Janzen, Santiago and Sanchez visited one shelter located in a large stadium that has housed 1,200 people for more than a month. Although there were plenty of mattresses, the visitors found the building dark and with few activities for the people.

"It's an unhealthy situation for them socially and psychologically," Janzen says.

In cooperation with Venezuelan Mennonite churches, MCC, EMM and MENCOLDES have already formed a preliminary plan for a $324,000 response. Over the next six months, MCC and its partners will provide $30,000 for local purchases of food, toys and basic supplies; 10,000 health kits; and 23,000 relief buckets.

The buckets include:

- 4 bars of antibacterial soap
- 1 bottle of shampoo (13 to 24 ounces), placed in a plastic bag
- 10 cups of powdered laundry detergent, double bagged in 1-gallon resealable plastic bags
- 1 tube of toothpaste, minimum 8 ounces
- 4 adult-size toothbrushes, in packages
- 4 new bath towels, medium weight, not white
- 1 each: hairbrush, wide-tooth comb and fingernail clipper
- 1 box of adhesive bandages, minimum 40, assorted preferred
- 1 package of 18 to 24 sanitary pads, thin maxi or ultrathin.

Contents need to be limited to the above list. Contents should be boxed and delivered to the nearest MCC collection site. Volunteers at MCC resource centers will repack the contents into five-gallon buckets for shipment. MCC also requests a $10 contribution for each bucket to purchase a Spanish-language Bible and cover the cost of shipping and distribution. *—John M. Spidalieri and Carol Thiessen for EMM and MCC news services*

Multicultural work meeting topic

ELKHART, Ind.—The Anabaptist Evangelism Council will focus on ministry in multicultural settings for its third annual meeting, to be held at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart Feb. 19-20. The council is a Mennonite and Church of the Brethren think tank. Speakers will include AMBS president Nelson Kraybill, AMBS professor Art McPhee and Austin (Texas) Mennonite Church pastor Stephen Reid.*—GCMC News Service*

J. Kevin Miller

Seated on a donkey

Jill Graber, a senior at Bethany Christian Schools in Goshen, Ind., gets her shot blocked from behind by parent Scott Anderson during a Jan. 29 game of donkey basketball at the school. The game—featuring teams of pastors, teachers, students and parents—raised $2,750 for Bethany's middle school.

Old cookbook getting new format

The 50-year-old classic *Mennonite Community Cookbook* by Mary Emma Showalter will be available later this year in a new format. Herald Press has completed negotiations with Random House Value Publishing of New York for a new hardcover edition.

The Random House version will be titled *Pennsylvania Dutch Cooking: A Mennonite Community Cookbook.* Royalties will be paid to Herald Press and shared with the author.

Herald Press will continue its coil-bound edition. First published by Winston Press of Philadelphia in 1950 for the Mennonite Community Association, Herald Press secured rights to the book decades ago. It is now in its 39th printing; more than 423,000 copies are in print.

Mennonite Community Cookbook ranked third on Herald Press' best-seller list last year, behind *More-With-Less Cookbook* by Doris Janzen Longacre and *Chestnut Ridge Acres* by Carrie Bender.

MDS in action after snowstorm hits Arkansas

NASHVILLE, Ark.—Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) is responding to a powerful Jan. 27 storm that dumped 16 inches of heavy, wet snow on southwestern Arkansas, leading to the collapse of 200 chicken houses and the loss of tens of thousands of chickens.

While residential structures suffered no significant damage, the unusually heavy snowfall was too great for farm buildings. MDS volunteers from the Arkansas Unit and from Region III are assisting with cleanup.

Eighteen chicken houses owned by members of Mineral Springs Amish Mennonite Church were completely destroyed.—*MDS News Service*

AMBS Pastors Week draws 175 participants

ELKHART, Ind.—Participants at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary's annual Pastors Week put words into action Jan. 24-27. Eleven pastors spent one afternoon visiting four Elkhart-area stores to witness against the violent toys on their shelves. Meanwhile, other pastors read to students at Hawthorne Elementary School, near AMBS's Elkhart campus.

The weekend, which focused on witness and evangelism, drew 175 people. Presenters were Calvin Shenk, Bible and religion professor from Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., and Michael Banks, pastor of King of Glory Tabernacle, Bronx, N.Y., and a Mennonite Church peace evangelist.

Internet courses boost EMS spring enrollment

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Computer-based, distance-learning courses have contributed to a 25 percent increase in enrollment at Eastern Mennonite Seminary. Total enrollment for the spring semester is 124, up from 99 last fall. Sixteen students are taking "Old Testament: Text in Context" and "Mennonite History" via the Internet. The students include two from Lithuania, a Mennonite church worker in the Middle East and a Mennonite mission worker in Peru.

Consultation addresses spiritual warfare

TECHNY, Ill.—Spiritual warfare was the theme for a Jan. 22-23 consultation of the Council of International Ministries (CIM), an organization of 22 North American Mennonite mission and service institutions.

Spiritual warfare is an apt description of the confrontation between God and evil that some conference participants said they encounter in their overseas assignments. Yet, they also said, it is a concept that their supporting congregations may not understand. But other conference participants said spiritual warfare can be easily misconstrued as being directed against adherents of other religions.

During CIM business sessions, Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Calif., was accepted as a member.

CPT members protest Navy communication site

ASHLAND, Wis.—Seven Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) members were cited for trespassing Jan. 22 at a military communications facility in northern Wisconsin. The U.S. Navy's Extremely Low Frequency transmitter site sends messages to submerged Trident submaries around the world.

Twelve CPT and 50 other demonstrators participated in the protest. The trespassers climbed a fence to enter the site but did not go any farther than the fence line. They were fined $212 each and given a Feb. 15 court date.—*CPT News Service*

by the way ...

Thirty-one percent of high school students in a 1999 survey said the integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church makes them feel hopeful about the future of the church, while 3 percent said integration makes them feel less hopeful.—*Samuel Project*

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Births

Franz, Clare Wiebe, Jan. 15, to John and Margo (Wiebe) Franz, Lakewood, Colo.

Freestone, LaVina LaRyn, Jan. 10, to Ben and Stephanie (Goans) Freestone, Cromwell, Ind.

Greenawalt, Madison Anne, Jan. 31, to Kimberlee and Tedd Greenawalt, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hathaway, Raine Isabel, Jan. 16, to Linda (Schweitzer) and Tim Hathaway, Wellman, Iowa.

Jones, Gavin Michael Dirks, Jan. 25, to Rachel Dirks and Michael Jones, Newton, Kan.

Kaufman, Rylee Dawn Michelle, Dec. 30, to Greg and Tammy (Roth) Kaufman, Tavistock, Ont.

Kennedy, Jesse Dean, Jan. 22, to Keith and Michelle (Friesen) Kennedy, Leavenworth, Kan.

Mast, Peyton Alexandra, Dec. 19, to Randy and Veronica (Gingerich) Mast, Plain City, Ohio.

Palumbo, Anthony Ryan, Dec. 7, to Jerri (Hofer) and Joe Palumbo, Highlands Ranch, Colo.

Regier, Drake Wollman, Jan. 19, to Marilyn (Wollman) and Steve Regier, Wichita, Kan.

Rumbold, MacKenzie Marie, Jan. 17, to Alan and Julie Rumbold, Benson, Ill.

Thomas, Ariel Rose, Dec. 31, to Laura and Mike Thomas, Goshen, Ind.

Tripp, Eli Samuel Harley, Dec. 9, to Mona Jean Harley and Alan Tripp, Madison, Wis.

Wedel, Michael Edward, Dec. 21, to Melissa Manda and Edward Wedel, Jefferson City, Mo.

Witmer, Emily Renee, Dec. 20, to Jennifer (Lehman) and Richard Witmer, Manheim, Pa.

Marriages

Chisholm/Lehman: Jeff Chisholm, Lakewood, Colo., and Carrie Lehman, Paoli, Ind., Dec. 19 at Paoli Mennonite Fellowship.

Detweiler/Grove: Beth Detweiler, Elkhart, Ind., and Ben Grove Jr., Elkhart, Dec. 11 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Eichelberger/Garton: Brad Eichelberger, Wayland, Iowa, and April Garton, Ames, Iowa, Jan. 8 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Geiser/Hansel: Doug Geiser, Akron, Ohio, and Amy Hansel, Akron, Dec. 31 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Headings/Smith: Bruce Headings, Goshen, Ind., and Rachel Smith, Wellman, Iowa, Nov. 27.

Martin/Stoll: Julie Martin, Steele, N.D., and Shawn Stoll, Casselton, N.D., Dec. 26 at United Methodist Church, Arthur, N.D.

Deaths

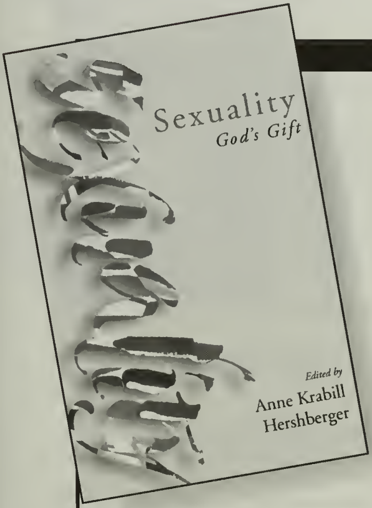
Alderfer, Wilmer, 89, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 18. Spouse: Elizabeth Verna Young Alderfer. Parents: John and Lizzie Ann Moyer Alderfer (deceased). Other survivors: children Murray, Ferrill, Wilmer Jr., Arlene, Lorraine, Linda Welty; 10 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 20 at Souderton Mennonite Homes Chapel.

Bontrager, Eli, 86, Hesston, Kan., died Jan. 25 of cancer. Spouse: Bessie Remmenga Holman Bontrager. Parents: David and Mary Bontrager Bontrager (deceased). Other survivors: children Ivan, Mervin, Orvin, Inez Unruh; stepchildren Bob Holman, Henrietta Shingleton, Verda Kanada, Elizabeth Williams; 11 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; 15 stepgrandchildren; 17 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 29 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Bontrager, Tonya Lyn, 24, Fort Wayne, Ind., died Jan. 19. Parents: Lowell and Verda Bontrager. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Gerber, Eulalia Steiner, 100, Bluffton, Ohio, died Jan. 19. Spouse: John Gerber (deceased). Parents: Noah and Elizabeth Lugibihl Steiner (deceased). Survivors: stepdaughters Rosemary Spitnale, Charlotte Cole. Funeral: Jan. 25 at Bluffton.

Graber, Elizabeth, 97, South Hutchinson, Kan., died Jan. 24. Spouse: Henry Graber (deceased). Parents: Peter and Helena Graber Janzen (deceased). Survivors: children Marvin, LeRoy, Wilbur, Robert, Virginia Murray; 15 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren; 13 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 28 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan.



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Jantzen, Agnes Albrecht, 91, Beatrice, Neb., died Jan. 18. Spouse: Abraham Jantzen (deceased). Parents: Heinrich and Marie Wiens Albrecht (deceased). Survivors: children Dorothy Luker, Harlan, Erna Thieszen, Ernest, Alvin, Gerald, Ruth Lunn; 17 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Larimer, Kay Arras, 55, Fort Wayne, Ind., died Jan. 14 of heart failure. Spouse: James Larimer. Parents: Lawrence and Lucille Arras. Other survivors: children Mark, Tina. Funeral: Jan. 18 at Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne.

Lebold, Marion, 78, Wellesley, Ont., died Dec. 1. Spouse: John Lebold (deceased). Survivors: children Joyce Schwartzentruber, Ronald. Funeral: Dec. 3 at Faith Mennonite Church, Wellesley.

Lehman, Nannie Swope, 98, Salem, Ohio, died Jan. 20 of cancer. Spouse: Arden Lehman (deceased). Parents: Emanuel and Maggie Burkholder Swope (deceased). Survivors: children Helen Bowman, Dorothy Beck; four grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 24 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana, Ohio.

Moyer, Elsie Yothers, 82, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 15. Spouse: Henry Moyer. Parents: Abram and Annie Rice Yothers (deceased). Other survivors: children Laverne, Robert, Nancy Freed; six grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 19 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Nunemaker, Edna, 97, Elizabethtown, Pa., died Jan. 10. Parents: Edgar and Emma Rutt Nunemaker (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 13.

Risser, Samuel, 70, Washington Boro, Pa., died Jan. 22. Spouse: Rachel Baumen Risser. Parents: Christ and Anna Hernley Risser (deceased). Other survivors: children Carol Martin, Jay, Jerry, James, Joe, Jeffrey, John, Terry, Randy; 21 grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 26 at Masonville Mennonite Church, Washington Boro.

Ross, Rolland, 85, Wooster, Ohio, died Jan. 13. Spouse: (1st) Martha Ross (deceased); (2nd) Dorcas Ross. Parents: Walter and Fannie Good Ross (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Roger, Alicia Ginther; stepchildren Donald Gable, Timothy Gable, Wava Kornhaus, Evangeline King, Phyllis Mitchell; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; 18 stepgrandchildren; 21 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 16 at Wooster Mennonite Church.

Rousey, Rose Elna, 78, Bedford Heights, Ohio, died Jan. 23. Spouse: Louis Rousey. Other survivors: children Louis, Janet Garrod; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 26 at Friendship Mennonite Church, Bedford Heights.

Rutschman, James Daniel, 80, North Newton, Kan., died Jan. 21 of cancer. Spouse: Charlotte Leap Rutschman. Parents: Fred and Wilhelmina Ewy Rutschman (deceased). Survivors: son Roger; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 29 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Schertz, Eugene, 74, Metamora, Ill., died Jan. 14 of a heart attack. Spouse: Orpha Bachman Schertz. Parents: Edwin and Emma Schertz (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Pat Carlton, Deb Rauh, Cyndi Troyer. Funeral: Jan. 17 at Metamora.

Schnell, Helen, 91, Glendale, Ariz., died Jan. 19. Spouse: Russell Schnell (deceased). Parents: Melvin and Lillie Hostetter Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Carolyn Yost, Marilyn Memmer, Evelyn Moler, Tamar Myers; 11 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Glencroft Retirement Center, Glendale.

Showalter Sr., Owen Franklin, 91, Harrisonburg, Va., died Jan. 21 of cancer. Spouse: Edith Rhodes Showalter. Parents: Howard and Flora Grove Showalter (deceased). Other survivors: children Sharon Harman, Harley, Myron, O. Franklin Jr., Ruel, Welby, Stuart, H.D. Hollis; 15 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 25 at Trissels Mennonite Church, Broadway, Va.

Steinman, Adeline, 79, New Hamburg, Ont., died Jan. 17. Parents: Joseph and Magdalena Brenneman Steinman (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 19 at Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg.

Sudermann, John, 65, Denver, died Dec. 28. Parents: Jacob (deceased) and Hilda Sudermann. Funeral: Jan. 6 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Troyer, Ferne Kauffman, 96, LaGrange, Ind., died Jan. 16. Spouse: Calvin Troyer (deceased). Parents: Ora and Ida Beechy Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children John, Paul; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 19 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind.

Waltner, Harvey, 94, South Hutchinson, Kan., died Jan. 17. Spouse: Anna Krehbiel (deceased). Parents: Joe and Carrie Graber Waltner (deceased). Survivors: children Eugene, Alan, Betty Krehbiel; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 21 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan.

Yantzi, Lloyd, 78, New Hamburg, Ont., died Dec. 2. Spouse: Pearl Cressman Yantzi. Parents: Michael and Nancy Iutzi Yantzi (deceased). Survivors: daughter LeEtta Erb; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 5 at Hillcrest Mennonite Church, New Hamburg.

Yoder, Annie, 90, Belleville, Pa., died Jan. 16. Spouse: Albert Yoder (deceased). Parents: John and Sallie Yoder Peachey (deceased). Survivors: son Floyd; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 20 at Valley View Haven Chapel, Belleville.

Correction: Arthur J. Goering's parents were John C. and Adina Wedel Goering. His obituary was incorrect in the Feb. 1 issue.

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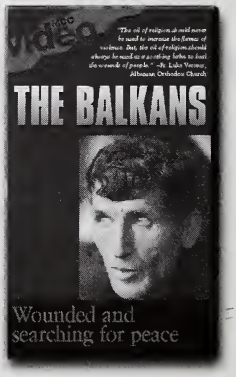
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classifieds

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks full-time ***Spanish teacher*** to begin as soon as possible. Contact Barbara Moses, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; 215-769-5363.

- **China Educational Exchange**, an inter-Mennonite program, is sponsoring a ***five-week teaching program in China*** this summer. One week of orientation and sightseeing in Beijing is included, and teaching experience is not required. For more information, contact CEE, 1521 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-6983; email ChinaEdEx@aol.com

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a ***coordinator of Christian education***, part-time (26 hours/week). Organizational, creative, self-starting, teaching and relational skills desired. Position is immediately available. Contact Ken Bontreger, Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Pine Lake Fellowship Camp** of Meridian, Miss., is looking for a ***highly motivated and creative believer*** to provide direction and leadership for entire camping ministry. Full-time position starting June 1, 2000. For information, contact PLFC, 10371 Pine Lake Rd., Meridian, MS 39307; 601-483-2267; email plcamp@mississippi.net

- **Called to ministry?** Swamp Mennonite Church in rural southeastern Pennsylvania, one hour north of Philadelphia, seeking full-time ***associate pastor of youth ministries***. Utilize your gifts in our Anabaptist community.

  Send resume to Swamp Mennonite Church, attn. Search Committee, 2125 Rosedale Road, Quakertown, PA 18951; email swamppb@fast.net

- **Attention churches!** For sale: 98 Chevy Express ***15-passenger van***. V8, automatic, full power, front and rear a.c., one local owner, 28,000 miles. Like new; beige color. Call Irv Schroeder, 1-800-947-3119; ask for Irv.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Berne, Ind., seeks a full-time ***youth pastor***. Address inquiries/resumes by March 15, 2000, to First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-3108; email craig@firstmennonite.org

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate minister*** with emphasis on youth and young adult ministries. Organizational skills, a heart for youth, some experience in youth ministries, and bachelor's degree desired. Position is available immediately.

  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Albany Mennonite Church**, Albany, Ore., is seeking applicants for a full-time ***lead pastor*** beginning summer 2000. This congregation of approximately 125 is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley, 70 miles south of Portland. Applications accepted through March 31.

  Contact Larry Hauder, Conference Minister, 2028 N. 16th St., Boise, ID 83702; 208-336-5646; email lhauder@compuserve.com

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***area representative to Europe***, beginning July 1, 2000. Approximately half-time. Reside in Europe or U.S. Develop strategy, oversee personnel, relate with European churches. Europe experience required.

  Contact Mervin Charles, Box 628, Salunga, PA 17538; 717-898-2251; email mervinc@emm.org

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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- **Hyattsville Mennonite Church**, Hyattsville, Md., will be celebrating its ***50th anniversary*** in 2002 and will be ***publishing a history*** to commemorate the event. We want to hear anecdotes or other reminiscences about Hyattsville Mennonite from any and all of our far-flung former attendees. Pictures also welcome and will be returned.

  Mailing address: Hyattsville Mennonite Church, Church History Project, 4217 East-West Highway, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** (MMA) is seeking an ***assistant investment manager*** to manage the fixed-income portfolios for MMA Capital Management and short-term bond portfolios for the Mennonite Foundation. Will also provide financial analyst support for all fixed-income portfolios. Qualified applicants will have strong analytical skills. MBA or MA in economics and portfolio management experience preferred.

  Send or fax resume to MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527-0483; fax 219-533-5264; email Cyndeedb@mma-online.org

- **Indian Creek Foundation**, located in central Montgomery County, Pa., has recently opened a new Personal Care Home and is seeking a dedicated individual to serve as ***house parent*** for residents with developmental disabilities. We are also happy to consider a couple for the position. We are offering a competitive salary, room and board, and full benefits, including health insurance, pension plan, tuition assistance, generous vacation leave and paid holidays. Requirements include a high school diploma or GED, one year of experience in the MR field, and a valid driver's license.

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- **Bluffton College** religion department seeks applicants for tenure-track position beginning fall 2000. Ph.D. required with specialization in ***Old or New Testament*** (ABD considered). Teach introductory and advanced biblical studies courses in an expanding department. Strong commitment to teaching excellence and serious scholarship expected. Rank/salary commensurate with background and experience within the college pay scale. For more information see http://www.bluffton.edu. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Joetta Schlabach, special assistant to the dean, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** announces faculty opening in ***music*** beginning fall 2000. One-year sabbatical replacement. Doctorate preferred, master's degree required. Performance experience preferred. Teaching in areas of music theory, music education and music history. Violin instruction in the Preparatory Music program. Other possible courses include music appreciation and beginning piano or voice instruction. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian liberal arts environment who are familiar with and support of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Herbert Swartz, Interim VP and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin March 1. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

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Biblical golf

by Lynn Miller

My wife and I moved to Bluffton, Ohio, several years ago and discovered that we were living just two miles from a nice golf course. Wanting to be good stewards of the benefits of what God (and Bluffton) had provided, we decided we should learn to play golf. However, since making that decision, I have run into a number of my peers who have raised some serious theological concerns about the place of golf in the kingdom of God. And so, in my own defense, I have been forced to dig deeply into the Scriptures to see what God says about what at first glance might be such a frivolous undertaking. And I want to tell you that what I found was truly revealing.

For example, many people think golf is a fairly modern sport invented in Scotland by shepherds who had nothing better to do while watching their sheep, a good biblical image in itself, but totally incorrect. If you look carefully at the scriptural evidence, you will discover, as I have, that golf was invented by none other than God. In fact, the Bible tells us that not only was the first golf course created by God, he also intended that all of life be involved in golf. The author of the book of Genesis says that God said, "To every living thing that has the breath of life I have given every green" (1:30).

The manufacture of the first golf club is also described in the Bible. In 2 Kings 6:4-6, we are told that the first golf club was made from an axehead. This is how it happened according to the Holy Scripture. In the midst of a logging operation conducted by the sons of the prophets, an axehead flew off its handle and fell into the water. The man in charge asked where the axehead had fallen, and when shown the place, the text tells us, "He cut off a stick and threw it in there, and made the iron."

Jim Whitmer

The Bible also has something to say about how golfers should keep score. For example, the practice of allowing a mulligan, a second try after a poor shot, is expressly forbidden by Jesus himself. In Luke 16:17 Jesus clearly says, "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one stroke to be dropped."

We can learn a lot about the stresses of playing golf by rereading the book of Job and reflecting on the real source of his woes.

Part of what God has allowed Satan to do to Job to prove his faith obviously had a lot to do with his golf swing, especially with his driver. In 39:7, he describes his reaction after his tee shot lands in the rough. He cries out in anguish, as any normal golfer would, "Hear the shouts of the driver, he ranges the mountains as a pasture and searches after every green." And Job's disgust with his current set of golf clubs is also evident in his writings: "My clubs are counted as stubble" (41:29).

For those who wonder about a woman's place in the scheme of things, let me tell you that we even have a description of God playing golf with a woman. Her name was Judith, and in 8:25 of her book, apparently in the midst of a difficult and slow round with God, she says to the spectators, "In spite of everything, let us give thanks to the Lord our God, who is putting."

Proper attire on the course has always been important, no matter whom you are playing with. Leviticus 6:10 tells us this is especially true for priests, for "the priest shall put on his vestments after putting."

Modern-day golf tournaments often have at least one spectator who is known for making comments about the golf swings of different players. It turns out the same was true back in biblical days. For example, it is recorded in 2 Kings 9:20 that a spectator watching a match from the tower of Jezreel observed, "It looks like the driving of Jehu, son of Imish, for he drives like a maniac."

Most people know that ethics is a major concern of Jesus, but not many people know that golf etiquette is also an interest of his. Obviously out of concern for the safety of the spectators, Jesus asks the disciples in John 4:35, "Do you not say, Fore!"

Finally, in his concern for the common person, John the Baptist gives instruction for the building of a beginners' golf course. In Luke 3:5, he says, "Every valley shall be filled and every mountain and hill be made low, and the crooked will be made straight, and the rough made smooth."

What more could a golfer want from God?

Golf was invented by none other than God. In fact, the Bible tells us that not only was the first golf course created by God, he also intended that all of life be involved in golf.

Lynn Miller lives near Bluffton, Ohio.

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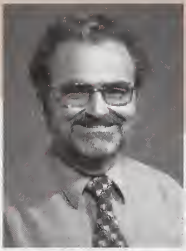

J. Lorne Peachey

Like a tree, planted by the water

Psalm 1 has a wonderful simile for a relationship with God. The righteous person, says the psalmist, is like “a tree planted by streams of water” (Psalm 1:3 NIV).

We all know, of course, what that tree is like: green leaves providing lots of shade; a well-proportioned shape that's a beauty to look at; fruit every season on cue. Who doesn't dream of a spiritual life like that?

It's not, however, how I experience being a Christian. Sometimes God is near, and I do feel like the green, shady tree by the psalmist's river. Sometimes I can identify fruit associated with being a disciple of Jesus Christ. More times, however, when things seem out of control and I'm not sure which way to turn, I wonder where God is. As a tree I feel bare, stark, naked.

It is at times like these that I remind myself that barrenness is the way many trees spend at least half their lives here in the Northeastern United States where I live. The leafy, green, deciduous growths are that way for only a few months. Most of the time trees are either getting new leaves (spring), losing old ones (autumn) or standing bare (winter) with no visible signs of life unless one really taps deep into the inner being.

The constancy of God's love, care and closeness sustains us as God's children, no matter the circumstances in which we are planted or the kind of tree we are.

We have no way of knowing what all the writer had in mind when penning this psalm of praise to God. And trees in the Middle East do have different characteristics and a different climate from those of North America. But I find it helpful to contemplate the different stages in the life of a tree as I muddle through my relationship with God and my attempt to be a faithful disciple.

The temptation I have is to constantly measure myself against what can only be defined as an ethic of success, even in how I live as a Christian. You know, the leafy maple that always has a kind word for others. The sturdy oak that can stand all kinds of misunderstanding and never gives in to the winds of unsound doctrine. Or the towering evergreen that inspires awe and reverence.

True, there are times when I may be one of these trees. More times I find myself the bare tree of winter, lifting my branches to God in uncertainty, fear and doubt.

I take some comfort in the fact that the same was true of many of the heroes of the biblical story. Moses spent at least as much time in the wilderness, apparently doing nothing, as he did leading God's children out of the clutches of Egypt. The prophet Jeremiah's life was one of much more bewilderment and uncertainty than it was flourishing with the message of God. John the Baptist had a few short years of ministry bracketed by a wilderness experience before and imprisonment afterward. Even Jesus often found himself alone, praying in the wilderness, both literally and figuratively, during his three years of ministry on this earth.

But the bare tree is still planted by the water. Perhaps this is the chief point of the psalmist's eloquent comparison of trees and the children of God. No matter what the season or the circumstance, no matter if the tree is bearing fruit or simply bare, the water by which the tree is planted is constant in its nourishment.

It is this constancy of God's love, care and closeness that sustains us as God's children, no matter the circumstances in which we are planted or the kind of tree we are. Rooted in God's love and care, the psalmist says, the righteous are different from the wicked, who have nothing and no one to rely on and therefore become like chaff which the wind drives away.

God's people, like trees, planted by the water. That comparison helps me through all sorts of difficulties and trials as well as joys and pleasures. Some of us will sometimes have leafy branches, some of us may be ever green. Many of us will often have only bare branches. Together we become the beautiful forest known as the kingdom of God. With the psalmist we rejoice that it is a forest nourished by the stream of living water that is forever constant.—*jlp*

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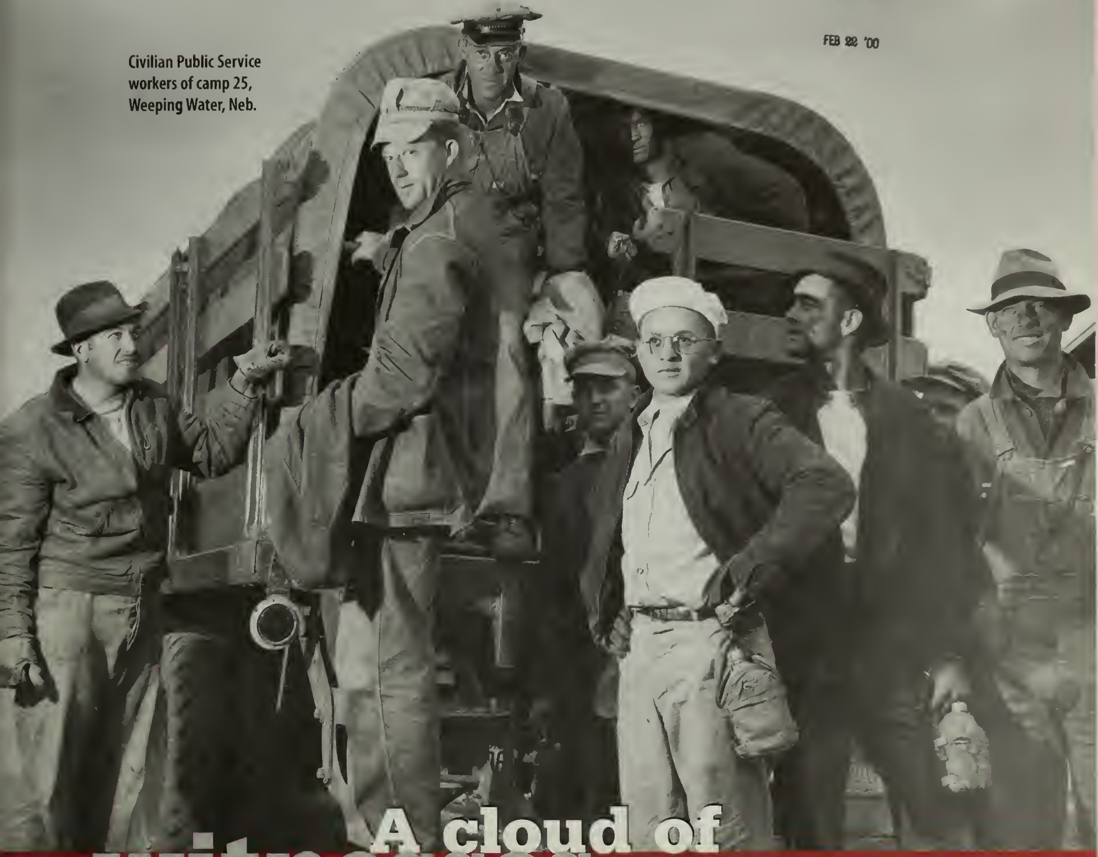

Civilian Public Service workers of camp 25, Weeping Water, Neb.

A cloud of witnesses

Influential Mennonites of the 20th century

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8 Freedom from addiction
10 Raising Mennonite visibility in St. Louis
12 Inmates establish fund for healing

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

At rest

Thank you for the two excellent articles in the Feb. 1 issue, "Remember the Sabbath" by John Rempel and "Rethink the Sabbath for Today" by Gerald Gerbrandt.—*Ruth L. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

I was surprised to find two reactionary articles concerning Old Testament law of keeping the Sabbath and the proactive editorial about our tarnished Mennonite public image (Feb. 1). The articles encouraging the reinstatement of the Old Testament religious practices of keeping a special Sabbath day no matter which day is designated seems completely contrary to the New Testament, which makes "Christ in us" the resource for everyday rest, as stated in Matthew 11:28-30: "Come to me … and you shall find rest for your souls."

This encouragement to keep the law is the same false doctrine about which the apostles were admonishing and warning the young churches in the first century: "But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain" (Galatians 4:9-11). "So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered his rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from his. Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience" (Hebrews 4:9-11).

It seems clear to me that the writer of Hebrews is telling us that there is a heart-level Sabbath rest today and every day for those willing to lay aside their self-initiated works as God did from his. However, there is the costly condition of giving up our independence, disbelief and disobedience in order to enter his kingdom rest here and now. I can testify that it is worth the cost to experience the joy, peace and rest walking and working with the Master every day of the year.—*Paul C. Sangree, Millersville, Pa.*

Where are our priorities?

I am writing this letter in response to the painfully and beautifully written article about the death of a man named Paul as told by his brother in "How I Coped With My Brother's Murder" (Jan. 25), a reprint from Hartford (Conn.) Catholic Worker newsletter. (Connecting the Catholic Worker and *The Mennonite* warms my heart.)

In the third paragraph, in the midst of a series of "why" questions, was this tragic one that I continue to ask to the point of making Mennonites on the West Coast very uncomfortable: "How is it possible that a man so sick [as to have killed Paul] is out on the streets instead of getting the care he needs?" And then there is the follow-up statement for all of us: "Like so many similar tragedies, this one could have been prevented if our society and government placed as their top priority meeting the needs of the afflicted and eliminating poverty."

When a Mennonite mental health facility closes and it creates not even a ripple in the waters of our faith community, one must ask, "Where are our priorities?"

Kings View psychiatric hospital in Reedley, Calif., closed in the early 1990s, and I am waiting to hear anything about how bad we all feel because of the kind of tragedy that sets up disturbed homeless people in conflict with the only people left to deal with their issues. We are still waiting on the West Coast for an explanation of the closing of one of the best facilities in the Mennonite group of psychiatric hospitals. (Let's hear it for managed care and those administrators who continue doing business with them.)—*Jim Compton-Schmidt, Reedley, Calif.*

The force is with us

Doug Kaufman has simplified things too much in his article, "A Tale of Two Gospels" (Feb. 8). While most of us do accept the gospel of Jesus in preference to the Stars Wars gospel, we have to admit that there is a place for the Star Wars gospel in our faith. Call it fantasy, wish fulfillment or what you will, we have a strong need to dream about the violent triumph of good over evil. Indeed, we have a Star Wars gospel right in the New Testament: It's called the book of Revelation.—*Mitchell Brown, Wilmette, Ill.*

Culinary contribution

I especially appreciated the editorial "Amish Butter and Mennonite Cheese" (Feb. 1). While on a service assignment in El Paso, Texas, in 1975, I took a Spanish language class taught by someone with no Mennonite connections. He explained that cheese was not a part of the Mexican diet until the Mennonites came to Mexico. He credits the Mennonites with intro-

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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y readers say

ducing cheese to the Mexicans, and Mexicans are well aware of this. With this background I can easily understand the Las Cruces incident. *—Ted Zerger, Salina, Kan.*

A prayer for the 21st century

The 21st century should be the "environment century." If not, I feel that all life forms will very possibly be dead by 2050. This extermination could occur because we would not have enough air fit to breathe, water fit to drink and food fit to eat. So if we—in the United States, at least—want to hand down everything to our children and grandchildren in a better condition than it was passed down to us, we need to at least protect the environment.

2 Chronicles 7:14 instructs Christians to humble ourselves, seek God's face, pray and change our wicked ways. Then God will hear us from heaven, forgive our sins and heal our land. What a wonderful promise. Let's take those four steps. Then God will take the three steps.

Here is my prayer: "Help us, God, see that the 21st century is the environment century, that there can be interest throughout the earth for our protecting the environment. Help us keep this interest going so that all living people and things will be blessed with enough air fit to breathe, water fit to drink and food fit to eat."

Church of the Brethren writer T. Wayne Rieman's wonderful little booklet, *Simple Living: A New Necessity,* gives us some food for thought: "Don't let the hustle-bustle rat-racing world squeeze you into its mold—a high-pressure, competitive situation where you must: Go! Go! Drive! Push! Climb! Grasp! Get ahead! Pile things up! Climb the ladder!" This seems like a first step on the road to helping strengthen our delicate environment.*—Dwight E. Wratchford, Martinsburg, W.Va.*

Cover photo of CPS workers courtesy of Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kan. Sky by Skjold Photographs

20 FOR THE 20TH CENTURY

The 20 selections on the next four pages are not necessarily the greatest or the best Mennonites of the setting century. Nor should they be considered the most faithful. They may not even be the most well-known.

Rather, this cloud of witnesses was chosen by *The Mennonite* editorial staff—with reader input—as having had the most powerful influence on life and belief of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church in the 20th century.

In ways noticeable and not so noticeable, these 20 selections have profoundly shaped who we are as a people of faith, embodying many of the church-altering movements of the times. They have left a legacy for our work and witness in the 21st century. For that, we want to honor our history and praise our God.—*Editors*

Photo courtesy of Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kan.

Smoke jumpers of CPS camp 103 near Missoula, Mont.

The Civilian Public Service worker changed the church and became the most influential Mennonite of the 20th century.

Feeling the reverberations

World War II gave us G.I. Joe and Rosie the Riveter, who fought "the good war" and in the process changed the political, economic and cultural face of the world. Joe and Rosie's efforts gave us the Cold War, the military-industrial complex and the United States' perceived ranking as the greatest country on earth.

World War II also gave us the CPS worker, who heeded religious beliefs and in the process changed a church. As a result of Civilian Public Service, the CPS worker's experiences gave us new views of faith, the world and relationships between the two, thus shaking the foundations of Mennonite belief and witness. The reverberations were—and still are—felt at every level of church life: local congregations, institutions of higher education, inter-Mennonite relations (including the creation of a new Mennonite Church) and the host of church-related agencies and programs that emerged after the war as Mennonites were propelled into engagement with and service to the world.

No one affected the contemporary General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church like the CPS worker. That is why *The Mennonite* considers him (and her—there were also women in CPS) the most influential Mennonite of the 20th century.

At least four of the other 19 selections on *The Mennonite*'s list had direct CPS connections. But the significance of CPS cannot be measured solely according to the recognized leaders of North American Mennonitism. Instead, the true value of CPS is found among the rank and file who, long after leaving Brook Lane and Hill City and other CPS units across the United States, reflected the ideals of Christian witness and service in virtually anonymous fashion.

As one respondent to *The Mennonite*'s call for nominations noted, "The strength of the church is found not so much in the brilliant intellectuals or administrative leaders but in quiet, everyday discipleship and service."

Such people are those who found themselves called to church work as a result of CPS. But there are also those who returned home, taking their experiences and insights to Sunday schools and congregational committees. They created time to do more service or financially support others who did. By overt encouragement and subtle example, they influenced subsequent generations to emphasize service in their own lives, to carry the good news of Jesus Christ to the ends of the earth.

Such is the legacy of the CPS worker, the most influential Mennonite of the 20th century.

The other 19

While the CPS worker was chosen as the most influential Mennonite of the 20th century, the other 19 selections on the next three pages are only listed in alphabetical order, as are the honorable mention picks on pages 6-7.

Responding to *The Mennonite*'s invitation, more than 40 readers nominated some 140 people—writers, evangelists, professors, administrators, artists and more—as those having the greatest impact on the church during the century. Final selections were made by *The Mennonite* editorial staff.

Harold S. Bender

1897-1962

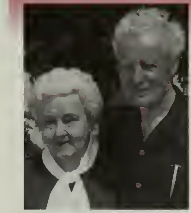
Nicknamed "The Pope" because of his authority, there are few corners of the church he didn't touch. Start with his landmark "The Anabaptist Vision" and then include CPS, Goshen Biblical Seminary, MCC, Mennonite Encyclopedia, Mennonite Historical Society, *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, more.

Edna Ruth Byler

1904-1976

The mustard seed was her car trunk. On a trip to Puerto Rico in 1947, she saw the needlework of poor women there and agreed to market it in the United States, selling it out of the back of her car. Such was the genesis of Ten Thousand Villages, which has profoundly affected our ways of serving and buying.

Elfrieda & Peter Dyck



Elfrieda 1917-
Peter 1914-

The World War II Mennonite refugee saga produced powerful stories—and two powerful storytellers. Regardless of their occupations—pastor, nurse, administrators—their 50 years-plus of speaking and writing on service, compassion and love have gone far to help shape Mennonite identity.

Henry A. Fast

1894-1990

He became known as "Mr. Conference" while GC field secretary for home missions from 1936 to 1940, visiting congregations and binding the denomination. He became the first CPS director in 1940 and helped found Mennonite Mental Health Services. He also was a pastor and professor and active in MCC and MWC.

Joseph D. Graber

1900-1978

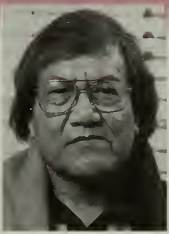
For 17 years a missionary in India and then MBM's first full-time general secretary for 23 years until his retirement in 1967, he was "Mr. Missions" of the Mennonite Church. His effective public speaking, prolific writing and influential administration raised missions awareness in the post Word War II-church.

Helmut Harder

1934-

As CMC executive secretary from 1990 to 1999, he was a chief proponent of the two-country structure for the integrated church. As a theologian, he was co-chair of the committee that drafted the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. He is head of the Mennonite delegation meeting with the Vatican.

Lawrence Hart



1933-

Perhaps more than anyone else in this country, he offers the reminder that Mennonitism does not belong only to Germanic white people. A Cheyenne peace chief, GC minister and longtime MCC board member, he is a tireless advocate for peace and justice between and within groups of people.

Abbreviations

AMBS—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.
CMBC—Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg
CMC—Conference of Mennonites in Canada
CPS—Civilian Public Service
EMM—Eastern Mennonite Missions
GC—General Conference Mennonite Church
MBM—Mennonite Board of Missions
MC—Mennonite Church
MCC—Mennonite Central Committee
MEDA—Mennonite Economic Development Associates
MMA—Mennonite Mutual Aid
MWC—Mennonite World Conference

20 FOR THE 20TH CENTURY

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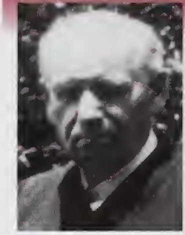
20 FOR THE 20TH CENTURY

continued

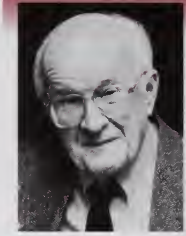
DANIEL KAUFFMAN



1865-1944

Through his writing and particularly as editor of *Gospel Herald* for 35 years, he was a primary shaper of MC doctrine before World War II. He was the main force in the creation of the MC denominational structure and served as moderator four times. At one time he served on 22 church boards and committees.

ROBERT KREIDER



1919-

His church career has been marked by versatility: service worker, college professor and president, historian, writer. An important analyst of Mennonite culture, he was instrumental in obtaining rediscovered *Martyrs Mirror* plates by Jan Luyken, around which he helped develop a traveling exhibit in the 1990s.

DORIS J. LONGACRE

1940-1979

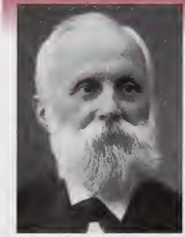
More than two decades after they were published, her wildly successful *More-With-Less* books continue to define Mennonitism for many people. The books reinforced discipleship for many Mennonites while introducing countless non-Mennonites to the faith. *More-With-Less Cookbook* is still a best-seller.

ORIE O. MILLER

1892-1977

He was a chief cook of the alphabet soup of Mennonite organizations in the middle of the century. One of the first three MCC workers, he guided the agency into full bloom as its executive secretary from 1935 to 1958. But he also played key roles in the development of CPS, EMM, MEDA, MMA and others.

CHRISTIAN NEFF



1863-1946

A leader of the Mennonites in Germany, his impact is felt across the globe as the father of MWC. The organization was born out of his proposal for a 1925 gathering to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Anabaptism. He was also co-editor of the Mennonitische Lexicon, the forerunner of the Mennonite Encyclopedia.

MARY OYER

1923-

A music professor and longtime conference song leader, she has blazed trails for the arts and for women. She has pushed Mennonite music beyond the traditional with new influences. Her visibility dating to when women did not appear on MC platforms has made her a model for women in leadership.

Honorable mention

Myron Augsburger (1929-), popular evangelist and academician also well-known in broader evangelical circles

Lois Barrett (1947-), pastor, theologian, church administrator, confession of faith writer

Atlee Beechy (1914-), prominent peace advocate with MCC and Seniors for Peace

George R. Brunk I (1871-1938), minister, bishop, evangelist, educator, writer

George R. Brunk II (1911-), standard-bearer of conservative Mennonitism who, with his brother, Lawrence, was a pioneer tent evangelist

Elmer Ediger (1917-1983), key player in development of post-World War II Mennonite mental health efforts

Henry J. Gerbrandt (1915-), Canadian churchman who as CMC general secretary, 1971-1981, presided over an era of conference renewal

Guy F. Hershberger (1896-1989), leading social ethicist, professor and author

Donald Kraybill (1945-), popularized the phrase "upside-down kingdom" with his book of that title

continued on next page

Of heroe

The Mennonite's call for nominations for the most influential Mennonites of the 20th century generated more than names. The invitation also brought reader criticism that the project was engaging in a secular venture inconsistent with our faith.

"This sounds very much like the discussion that the disciples had about which of them was the greatest," wrote Linda Gehman Peachey of Lancaster, Pa. "Didn't Jesus teach us a different way of relating to one another?"

Robert Kreider of North Newton, Kan., suggested scrapping the project in favor of recognizing "the losers of the century," calling it "an invitation to think thoughts of the upside-down kingdom."

"I might have some nominations," he wrote.

Theron F. Schlabach of Goshen, Ind., lamented the project's emphasis on "heroic history." "Does not a history dominated by heroes need to be balanced with a less individualistic, more collective understanding of who has led us and of what has shaped us?" he asked.

Vern Preheim

1935-

GC general secretary from 1980 through 1996, he worked hard to bring his denomination to an end; he was an ardent champion of the integration of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. Now an MCC staff member, he also served with the agency for 14 years before his GC post.

Menno Schrag

1904-1987

Other than CPS and MCC, nothing has done as much to link U.S. Mennonites of various stripes than *Mennonite Weekly Review.* He didn't start the inter-Mennonite newspaper, but during his 34 years as editor, it grew to build community by transcending denominational, theological and geographical boundaries.

Jacob J. Thiessen

1893-1977

Himself a Russian immigrant, his life was marked by concern for refugees. He served on the Canadian Mennonite Board of Colonization from 1927 to 1964 and on the MCC board from 1947 to 1964. He held numerous CMC positions, including moderator from 1943 to 1959, and helped establish CMBC in 1947.

Erland Waltner

1914-

He started his 20-year tenure as Mennonite Biblical Seminary president in 1958 and promptly helped usher in a new era of GC-MC relations. He oversaw relocation of the GC school from Chicago to Elkhart, Ind., to join with the MC Goshen Biblical Seminary to create AMBS. He also served as GC president.

nd losers

John Kreider of Harrisonburg, Va., echoed that point. "It seems to me that if credit is to be given, it should go to every person in the Mennonite community of faith and ultimately to Jesus Christ," he wrote.

But Kent Davis Sensenig of Cedar Falls, Iowa, fears that such an approach "implies that Christians are not to engage in historical reflection."

"If we don't know who is influencing us, what streams we are drinking from, what leaders we are following or what ideas/trends we are adopting, how are we to discern whether we're headed in a faithful direction?" he wrote.

John F. Murray of Kouts, Ind., provided scriptural support for such an undertaking. "If we follow the negative thinking … against making lists to honor our heroes of the faith, then we had better remove from our Bibles such chapters as Hebrews 11, Romans 16 and many more," he wrote. "Let us give honor where honor is due and so encourage our children to have noble heroes and aspirations."

Katie Funk Wiebe

1924-

A prolific Mennonite Brethren writer and speaker, she is well known in broader Mennonite circles as a pioneer and inspiration for women seeking greater roles in church leadership. She is also recognized for raising the credibility of Mennonite writing and in later years has given voice to widowhood.

John Howard Yoder

1927-1997

While misconduct and church discipline have tarnished his legacy, he was a theological giant, both within and beyond Mennonite circles. His *Politics of Jesus* remains a classic, and he inspired and influenced countless AMBS students. He was part of the challenging "Concern" movement of the 1950s.

Honorable mention
continued

Henry P. Krehbiel (1862-1940), held numerous GC positions and traveled widely on behalf of the church

E.G. Kaufman (1891-1980), leading progressive and former China mission worker who, as Bethel College president, saved the school during the 1930s

James (1888-1978) and Rowena (?-1970) Lark, trail-blazng African-Americans in the Mennonite Church

Marlin Miller (1938-1994), first president of AMBS and co-chair of the committee that drafted the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective

Ron Sider (1938-), author of *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* who proposed what became Christian Peacemaker Teams

C. Henry Smith (1875-1948), Goshen College dean and Bluffton College professor who wrote the first popular Mennonite history

Willard Swartley (1936-), AMBS professor and dean whose *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women* has influenced Mennonite biblical interpretation

David Toews (1870-1947), oversaw immigration of 20,000 Russian Mennonites to Canada, 1923-1930

John C. Wenger (1900-1995), teacher, preacher and writer who was on the translation committee for the New International Version Bible

Freedom from addiction

One man's journey from drug addiction through the help of Narcotics Anonymous

by Hans Martin

The words drift through my consciousness: "He opened his eyes. I think he is coming to." My vision is hazy and blurred. Where am I? My thumb feels four times its regular size. I can hardly breathe. Is this a bad dream? What is this thing on my face?

"Take this thing off," I struggle to say. One of the people standing over me removes the mask from my face.

"Where am I?" I ask.

"You're in an ambulance," says a man in white.

Why? I think to myself. It starts to come slowly to me, then hits me like a freight train: Overdose!

I was doing drugs today. I remember doing heroin and cocaine. I think I'm dying. I ask one of the paramedics, "Am I going to live?"

Addiction has no prejudice. It doesn't care what color of skin or hair you have or how much education you have. It does not take into account whether you are a nice person or have a spouse or children. Addiction can strike anyone and, untreated, leads to death.

"Just keep talking to us," he says. "What is this bottle of pills?" He holds up the meds I take for a mental disorder. I try to tell him that it's a prescription drug and that I haven't taken any today. "That's good," he says.

"Are you going to have to pump my stomach?" I ask.

"Not if you haven't taken your medications," he says.

I look down at my thumb and see something attached to it. "What's that for?" I ask.

He tells me it's to take my vital signs.

We arrive at the hospital. They wheel me into the emergency room. IVs stick out of my arm with fluid slowly draining into my veins. They tell me the liquid will take the drugs out of my system.

I feel weak and find it hard to concentrate on what is going on around me. The paramedics ask me my name and what drugs I was doing. I keep thinking this is some nightmare, but part of me knows it is real. I answer as truthfully as I can remember. I ask them if I am going to live. They say it is likely since I am able to answer all their questions.

I've heard of people in life-threatening situations who make all kinds of promises to God if only God will get them out of the jam they're in. I don't do that exactly. All I want is to live. I mean, here I am at 20, my life has just begun. I'm not about to make false promises to God. I just want him to let me live. Unconditionally.

The next days are a blur. I remember little. I sleep in a hospital bed in intensive care as my body detoxes from all the drugs I put into it. When I awake, I find my dad sitting at the foot of my bed. What a sight for sore eyes!

I'm alive. I made it. It's like some miracle. It is a miracle.

The nurse comes in and says I can leave, that I'm better. I'm a new man as I walk out the hospital doors.

I have often prayed to meet the paramedics who saved my life. I thank God for their knowledge of such things. Without their wisdom, I would surely have been dead.

No prejudice: Addiction is powerful. It takes thousands of lives every year—from overdose, drunk driving, heart failure. Addiction has no prejudice. It doesn't care what color of skin or hair you have or how much education you have. It does not take into account whether you are a nice person or have a spouse or children. Addiction can strike anyone and, untreated, leads to death.

Fortunately, with the help of groups like Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and Narcotics Anonymous (NA), recovery is possible. I still remember the first 12-step meeting I attended. I went to an NA meeting with my mother. It moved me so much that I cried. At the end of the meeting I was sobbing.

In AA and NA, we follow the 12 steps that encourage us to find a "higher power" who will help us stay sober one day at a time. For many of us, it becomes a spiritual journey. People who do these steps by and large stay sober. I have seen people accumulate more than 30 years of sobriety or "clean time."

In NA we say the disease is incurable but can be arrested, and recovery is possible. I have seen people in the meetings as young as 15 and as old as 80. In these meetings, people tell their stories and share their experiences, strength and hope. If you open your heart to their message, you also feel hope. Even in despair, there is hope and strength.

At meetings, there may be as few as three people or as many as 200. NA teaches that "one addict helping another addict is without parallel." No one can really know your situation unless they have been through it themselves. I have been blessed with a lot of help from my family. Not every addict has this comfort. This is where NA can become his or her family.

Although this all sounds like a great solution, it doesn't always work. I have seen many people relapse, even while they are in the 12-step program. NA and AA are not cure-alls. People slip and get back into drugs or alcohol. They are quickly sucked back into the clutches of addiction and live dishonestly to get their next fix. Some even die.

At the beginning of each 12-step meeting, we say the Serenity Prayer. At the end, we say the Lord's Prayer. And we often add, "Let's have a moment of silence for the sick and still suffering addict, inside and outside these walls."

A way of life: There are many AA and NA slogans and sayings. At first I scoffed at these, but I have come to know that they work. They bring comfort and ease the pain that plagues an addict. I guess I could relate it to the Bible. There are many words of wisdom in that book. Some people laugh at those ideas, but when you open your heart to that truth, you will be forever blessed. I am not saying that NA is some kind of religion. It is not. It is a suggested way of life, and it works.

Some of the things in AA and NA can be helpful to people with problems other than addiction. And as it turns out, most addicts come to realize that their "higher power" is God.

Many of my friends are either addicts or ex-addicts. I have seen close friends die because of this disease. That is the hardest thing to deal with. Drugs and alcohol can make people do things they would never think of doing when sober. I think of addiction as a vise that tightens every day with use. All I can do is hope that people will wake up and face this thing head on. An addict must fight this battle every day for the rest of his life. No one is immune.

Drugs and alcohol can make people do things they would never think of doing when sober. No one is immune.

I silently pray each night for all the families going through hell because of addiction. I want them to know there is hope.

Even on the darkest nights, up in the corner of the sky is a light that casts its rays upon the earth. As the moon illuminates the streets and houses and trees, Someone is waiting for us to accept this Light and call it our own. That Light is recovery. That Light is life. We must embrace it.

Hans Martin lives in Harrisonburg, Va.

Trying to beat the post-St. Louis 99 blues

Mennonites still 'small blip' on city's radar screen

ST. LOUIS—Seven months ago, as nearly 10,000 Mennonites invaded the city for St. Louis 99, convention organizers spent $12,000 on a city-wide media blitz to raise Mennonite visibility in the metropolitan area. That included posters on public transportation, radio commercials and a billboard. The convention also generated news coverage for local TV, radio and print media.

All of which haven't changed things much. "The perception of Mennonites is pretty well back to what it was before the conference," says Ed Springer, pastor of St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, one of three Mennonite congregations in the city. "I think we have to become more aggressive in telling our story. We have to become more visible in the community."

Springer says only one person has started attending his congregation since the convention last summer. And generating exposure won't be an easy task.

"We don't have a neighborhood church. People are so scattered," Springer says. "We don't even own our own building. It is hard to convey an identity when you are mobile."

Most of the congregation's 65 members live within a 50-mile radius of the church. Furthermore, they have met in several different locations throughout the congregation's 25 years.

But help is coming. St. Louis is the Commission on Home Ministries' City on a Hill for 2000. The program awards $25,000 each year to an urban ministries program, alternating between the United States and Canada. Mennonite Board of Missions will add $10,000 to the grant. Springer is chair of the St. Louis City on a Hill coordinating committee, which hopes to use the money to start a multicultural congregation in the northern part of the city. "We just need to find the person to do the planting," he says.

To launch their City on a Hill work, St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship and Bethesda Mennonite Church—the two participating congregations in the city—held a joint worship service on Feb. 6.

"My vision is that we not limit God to a certain group," says James L. Long, a member of Bethesda and of the City on a Hill coordinating committee. "We're all in the same family whether we like it or not."

Brian Hook

Rachel Delcau (right), a volunteer at Plowsharing Crafts store in St. Louis, assists customer Walter Bower. The Ten Thousand Villages-affiliated store is one way Mennonites have tried to make themselves visible in the city.

Another new initiative is the Mennonite-affiliated St. Louis Peace Center, which is still in the developmental stages. One of the organizers is Shem Hartzler, a member of the St. Louis Mennonite Voluntary Service unit, who has spent much time researching grants for the project and learning from the well-established Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center.

Hartzler, from Hesston, Kan., has noticed that many St. Louis residents have an inaccurate view of Mennonites. "Most people associate Mennonites with the Amish," he says.

Plowsharing Crafts, a Ten Thousand Villages-affiliated store, is working to change that perception. "I can't say we have made a substantial contribution, but we have provided an educational resource," says manager Rich Howard-Willms. "People ask questions, and it gives us an opportunity to talk about who we are as Mennonites."

He says that most people he has talked with locally do not remember that there was a big Mennonite convention in the city last summer; St. Louis regularly hosts large conventions.

"It was a good experience to have the convention here," Howard-Willms says. "But unfortunately, it has not had any substantial effects to our store or our church. I think among some church groups, people have more knowledge about us. But I think we are still a small blip on the St. Louis screen."—*Brian Hook with GCMC News Service*

GC administrator's customs connection

About five years ago, Dave Linscheid was on his way to Winnipeg for a board meeting of *Der Bote,* a German-language newspaper supported by the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC).

As GC director of communications, it was a trip Linscheid routinely made from his office in Newton, Kan. On this particular trip, Linscheid was also delivering a box of books for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada office in Winnipeg when he was pulled over by customs officials in the Winnipeg airport.

"The customs officer . . . wanted to know what kind of committee meeting," Linscheid recalled. "I said the board of a German-language paper. She asked its name.

"When I said *Der Bote,* her whole face lit up. She said, 'Oh, the *Bote*! My parents read the *Bote*. You're fine. Go ahead.' She didn't even open the box."

That is one of Linscheid's favorite stories from his 13 years as GC director of communications. He is stepping down from the position next month to become director of alumni relations at Bethel College in North Newton, Kan.—*GCMC News Service*

MBM building team leaves Benin assignment with new understanding, vision for missions

COTONOU, Benin—The Mennonites had come to work for Christ. But they found that Christ was already at work in Benin. And they departed on Feb. 1 with the blessings of their Beninese brothers and sisters.

"There is so much they have given to us," says Steve Landes, a member of Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church. "I'm not going back the same person as when I came."

During a 19-day trip for Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), 12 Mennonites from North America and Spain helped with improvements on the facility housing the Benin Bible Institute in Cotonou. They painted the first floor and assisted African masons, who erected the facility's second-story walls. Work should be complete by June, thanks in part to the more than $70,000 raised by the building team.

"I want in the name of the whole church in Benin to express our thankfulness to all of you," Celestin Djimadja, vice president of the Bible institute's 11-member board of directors, told the group at a farewell service. "You came to serve us with your money and even your strength."

"The work is not yet finished, and you will be welcome back at another time," added institute administrator Marcellin Danhoundo, alluding to plans to add a third story to the building.

MBM came to Benin in 1969. By 1987, more than 30 African Independent Churches, the fastest-growing denominations on the continent, invited MBM to help them develop ministries in Bible teaching, health care and community development. Sporadic Bible classes under MBM worker Rodney Hollinger-Janzen grew into a systematic, three-year cycle of courses, which graduated its first class of 135 students in September 1997. A second class, which began with 120 students, will graduate this spring.

"This Bible institute is breaking down denominational barriers," one student said during a Jan. 15 meeting with building team members. "We students are grateful to God for allowing us to have the good things he gives us through our Bible school."

The current building, which is the institute's first permanent facility, was built with support from an earlier MBM building team.

"There are certain church leaders who would not be working with other church leaders if it were not for the Mennonites working to bring them together," says building team member Eldon Stoltzfus of Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. "We can have a great deal of appreciation, confidence and pride in the missionaries we are supporting in Benin."

MBM in some locations, such as West Africa and Northern Ireland, has made a "declaration for independents," working to strengthen and expand the body of Christ in its faithful local expressions rather than introduce another denomination.

"MBM's work here was so different than I expected," says Debra Kauffman from Topeka (Ind.) Mennonite Church. "I didn't realize we were working in interdenominational ways. It was a pleasant surprise. … In this setting, it makes a lot of sense."

In addition to work with the Bible institute, team members also visited sites where MBM workers have supported evangelism, health care and community development efforts.

"The first reaction is, 'If we had so many thousand dollars, we can fix everything.' But there are things money can't fix," says team member Russ Hochstetler from Kern Road Mennonite Church in South Bend, Ind. "They depend on God and the Spirit much more than we have. … I have gained and gotten more spiritual strength and encouragement here than what I brought and gave."—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*

Left: Pastor Samuel Somehe, a pastor and graduate of the Benin Bible Institute, carries scaffolding for improvement projects at the school. Right: Jose Gomez from Burgos (Spain) Mennonite Church catches 40 winks during a morning break. Gomez was one of 12 members of a Mennonite Board of Missions team that went to Benin last month to help with work at the Benin Bible Institute in Cotonou.

MBM photos by Tom Price

Basketball team no longer guy thing

It's not that the Freeman (S.D.) Academy boys basketball players were ignoring their head coach. It's just that it took some getting used to a woman's voice barking at them from the sidelines.

That's right—a woman. Pam Tschetter is in her first season at the helm of the Bobcats. She is one of two women in the state to be head coach of high school boys basketball teams.

"I really like new challenges," says Tschetter, a former standout athlete at the Mennonite school who now also teaches computer and social studies. "Sports is something I truly love."

She inherited an inexperienced team with only eight varsity players. Through Feb. 15, the Bobcats had a 5-11 record.

Both coach and players say the team listens to Tschetter. Even if they don't always hear her.—*Freeman Courier*

By establishing new fund, Manitoba inmates take step on journey to healing and forgiveness

The bottom line to our discussion was that victims need money.

—Wilma Derksen

WINNIPEG—The inmates said they were concerned about victims of serious crimes. The inmates said they wanted to make amends.

Then give your words meaning by acting on them, they were challenged. So the inmates did.

As a result, prisoners serving life sentences at two Manitoba facilities have raised about $2,800 to start the Candace Derksen Fund to create programs to assist victims of crime. The fund captures the intricacies of the journey from violence to healing and forgiveness, says Wilma Derksen, Candace's mother.

"It is a miracle that [the fund] even exists," she says. "It defies everything human in us. And it has taken all of us a long time to get here."

Candace, 13, was abducted and murdered in 1984. Since then, her mother has become a victim-rights advocate in Canada and is now director of Victims' Voice, a program of Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

The idea for the Candace Derksen Fund was born last March after Derksen addressed an assembly of inmates at Stony Mountain Institution, a medium-security prison near Winnipeg.

Hearing the inmates' response, Rene Durocher, director of a national program working with lifers, urged them to action. They quickly took him up on the idea and expressed a desire to establish a fund to help survivors of homicide and other victims of serious crime.

Durocher then approached Derksen for her approval. "I had an unbelievable mix of emotions," she recalls. "I respected the source of the offer. It was something that I've been teaching all these years, that in order to heal from an offense, the offender has to do something more than just offer words of apology.

"I was awed and honored by their gesture. And yet I knew that as victims we have incredible pain and fear that we associate with offenders. It's not easy to overcome the pain and fear. I knew this fund would demand that of us and everyone else who participates in it."

The Derksen family discussed the plan at length with Durocher. Derksen's 18-year-old son, Syras, wondered what the lifers' motives were. Would participating in the fund help them get parole?

"There's not one guy who can gain something from this except maybe their self-respect," Durocher responded. "Maybe it's selfish. But it's the kind of selfishness that can lead a person to be a better person."

Derksen also consulted with other victims of crime. "The bottom line to our discussion was that victims need money," she says. "The government spends billions of dollars on the rehabilitation of offenders and comparatively nothing on the healing of crime victims. The needs are enormous."

The lifers at Stony Mountain and at adjacent Rockwood Institution, a minimum-security facility, have raised their money through various fund-raising activities. Recently businesses and other individuals have joined the effort. Durocher says another $2,400 is needed before the fund is activated.

Grants from the trust will be disbursed through a Winnipeg foundation to fund victim-sensitive healing programs that are initiated and organized by victims. These could include an independent victims resource center, group support programs, speakers, panels and more. *—MCC Canada News Service*

MEDA

The load down

A truckload of manioc tubers are unloaded at a Mennonite Economic Development Associates-supported starch plant in Tres Palmas, Paraguay. About 85 percent of the world's starch supply comes from corn, while the rest comes from manioc. The plant provides extra income for local farmers, who often grow more manioc than needed for food consumption. The Tres Palmas plant, which opened last fall, processed about 1,400 metric tons of manioc into 330 metric tons of starch during its first operating season. The plant is a joint venture of Mennonite businesspeople in Paraguay, who invested $225,000; MEDA's Sarona Global Investment Fund added $212,000; and the Denver MEDA chapter lent $225,000.

For EMU couple, homework takes on added meaning

Jim Bishop

Lisa L. Schirch, assistant professor of conflict studies at Eastern Mennonite University, with one of her students: her husband, Bill Goldberg, who is working on a degree from EMU's Conflict Transformation Program.

HARRISONBURG, Va.—When he has questions or needs other help, Bill Goldberg may have a slight advantage over fellow students in the Conflict Transformation Program (CTP) at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg.

His professor in several classes is also his wife, Lisa L. Schirch.

Goldberg is a full-time student in the graduate-level CTP program where Schirch is an assistant professor of conflict studies. She joined the EMU faculty in 1997 and is also coordinator of the undergraduate justice, peace and conflict studies major.

Last fall, Goldberg took Schirch's course on "Comparative Theories of Conflict." This semester he is enrolled in her "Violence, Nonviolence and Conflict Transformation" class.

The couple met while team-teaching a course on negotiation and diplomacy at the University of Pittsburgh, where they were visiting faculty for a summer international studies program. They married in August 1998 and are expecting their first child, a daughter, in April.

"I've always enjoyed teaching with Lisa and have learned a lot from the experience," Goldberg says. "I wasn't sold on the need to always take a nonviolent approach to problems until we'd known each other for awhile.

"Taking her classes has given me a unique opportunity as a husband to more thoroughly understand the theories behind my wife's beliefs and actions. I'm impressed with her knowledge and how she presents it—she's a great teacher."

Says Schirch: "I credit Bill with making it comfortable for me to teach. He's always respectful to me yet holds his ground if our beliefs differ.

"Mutual respect is a key ingredient in any marriage and in any classroom. So in many ways, our roles in the classroom and our roles at home don't conflict."

How does the relationship work when it comes to writing and grading papers and other coursework?

"I often have students give feedback and grades to each other in my classes," Schirch says. "I've relied on this method a bit more in the classes with Bill. Other students affirmed that Bill was doing A work, so I didn't need to worry as much about being biased."

"I expect Lisa to grade my work fairly, ... but I told her that if I didn't get an A, I would be horrible to live with," Goldberg says with a smile.

His graduation date is uncertain because of the impending birth of their daughter.

"I see myself taking one class per semester and finishing in the spring of 2001 or pushing myself, taking two classes in the fall and completing the program this fall," Goldberg says. "I also want to be primary caregiver for our child, staying home with her for a few years."

After graduation, he says he would like to work with local high schools to help set up peer mediation projects and other programs that address teen violence.

For now, the couple feels that the pluses outweigh any problems in their intimate academic arena.

"We've always had a talkative marriage; now it's even more so," Schirch says. "We can sit at a coffeeshop for hours reflecting on stories in the newspaper, wondering how our theories of social change explain what's happening in the world.

"It's wonderful to be married to someone with many similar interests."

And Goldberg doesn't mind staying after school, either.—*Jim Bishop*

Genocide brings couple together

The similarities between Moussa David Ntambara and Esperance Uwambiyeyi are frightening: They each lost a spouse and children in the 1994 Rwandan uprising. Now those similarities have brought them together.

Ntambara and Uwambiyeyi were married Dec. 31, 1999, in Harrisonburg, Va., where Ntambara is a student in Eastern Mennonite University's (EMU) Conflict Transformation Program.

The two met in 1995 at a meeting of survivors of the Rwandan genocide. Since then, Ntambara worked with Catholic Relief Services in Rwanda before starting classes at EMU last August. Uwambiyeyi started a widow's association in Rwanda. She moved to Harrisonburg in November 1999.

"We can give each other support," Ntambara says. "Only people with experiences in life similar to yours can understand your wounds."—*Footpaths*

IF IT'S
MENNONITE,
YOU'LL FIND IT ON
MENNONITE.NET

MBM
Indiana-Michigan Conference
Seniors For Peace
Pacific Southwest Conference
Camp Camrec
Mennonite Church USA
Giving Project
Amigo Centre
MNA

Coming Soon:
Mennonite.net Webathon

visit us online @
http://www.mennonite.net

MMA enters community development arena

GOSHEN, Ind.—With the addition of a new program last fall, Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is expanding its efforts beyond insurance and financial services. The nonprofit Community Development Investments will support opportunities such as low-income housing, community development corporations and micro-enterprise programs.

Organizers anticipate a financial return from the program, although it probably won't be as great as other investments, since the money will be loaned at near- or below-market rates. But the social return is expected to be great.

"Community investing is well suited to our concept of stewardship," says Mark Regier, who coordinates MMA's socially responsible investing activities.

MMA plans to set aside a small portion of its assets—1 percent to 2 percent—for the program. In the future, a small percentage of funds from MMA Praxis Mutual Funds will also be invested.—*MMA News Service*

by the way ...

Mennonite.net, which hosts web sites for North American Mennonite congregations and organizations, has seen its daily number of visitors increase 520 percent over the last eight months.

Indiana boy focus of Disney TV movie

MIDDLEBURY, Ind.—Production began Jan. 24 on a Disney Channel real-life movie about a paralyzed Mennonite boy from Middlebury who is a soap-box derby racer. The movie is scheduled to air in May.

The movie, tentatively titled *Miracle in Lane 2,* is the story of Justin Yoder, who is paralyzed from the waist down due to spina bifida. His condition prevented him from competing in sports until he was introduced to soap-box racing. Yoder now competes regularly. The script was written by Joel Kauffman and Don Yost. The writers and Yoder are part of College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind.

Kauffman says faith is a central element to the movie. "We asked the [Yoder] family what was most important to them, and they said the faith connection," he says.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

Fund established in memory of late minister

ELKHART, Ind.—A new fund in memory of a longtime church worker has been created to help pay for pastors' and conference ministers' education. The Charlotte Holsopple Glick Pastoral Leadership Fund will provide grants and loans of as much as $250 for new and bi-vocational ministers' course work in any Mennonite Church theological education program.

Glick, then conference minister for Indiana-Michigan conference, died Feb. 8, 1999, at the age of 51 following a two-year bout with cancer. Since then, more than $17,000 has been raised for the fund, which is being administered by Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries. The first disbursements from the fund will be made in May.—*MBCM News Service*

Fire kills 23 horses at Manitoba camp

HEADINGLY, Man.—All 23 horses belonging to a Mennonite camp near Winnipeg were killed in a Jan. 5 fire that destroyed their barn on the camp's grounds. The fire is suspected to have started from a blanket falling near a baseboard heater.

"[The horses] were in the barn that night to warm up their hooves for the farrier for the next morning," says Ron Wiebe, manager of Camp Assiniboia. "Otherwise they are almost never in the barn."

The horses were used for the camp's horsemanship program. Assiniboia is one of three camps owned by the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Pennsylvania high school to add middle school

LANCASTER, Pa.—Students at Lancaster Mennonite High School next fall will be joined by students in grades six through eight. The school's board of trustees has approved a middle school to open in August and be called Lancaster Mennonite Middle School. No new facilities are planned with the addition of the middle school. Classes will be located in the current classroom building but in an area apart from most high school traffic.

TOURMAGINATION
DISCOVERY & FELLOWSHIP

OBERAMMERGAU Passion Play Tours

EMU European Tour and Oberammergau SOLD OUT May 22–June 4, 2000
European Heritage Tour and Oberammergau SOLD OUT June 12–28, 2000
Switzerland Glacier Express and Oberammergau SOLD OUT July 14–24, 2000
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Events

Giving Project Gathering, March 10-11, South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church. Contact: givingproject@Prodigy.com or 219-898-9020.

"Confronting the Powers: Overcoming Evil With Good" conference, March 16-18, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. Speaker: Walter Wink. Contact: kounss@emu.edu or 540-432-4260.

Lancaster Conference annual meeting, March 17-19, Lancaster, Pa.

Mennonite Health Assembly, March 23-26, Williamsburg, Va. Sponsored by Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Mutual Aid. Contact 800-611-4007 or mhsonline@compuserve.com.

Giving Project Gathering, March 24-25, Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio. Contact: givingproject@Prodigy.com or 219-898-9020.

Giving Project Gathering, April 14-15, Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa. Contact: givingproject@Prodigy.com or 219-898-9020.

Workers

Book, Miriam F., was installed Feb. 6 as associate pastor at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Coblentz, Randy, on Dec. 31 concluded a pastorate at Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.

Heatwole, Dwight, on Dec. 31 concluded a pastorate at Morning View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Martin, Lee, was installed Jan. 2 as pastor of Mount Clinton Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Mast, Tom, was licensed Jan. 16 as assistant pastor at Beldor Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Stair, Tim, was installed Feb. 13 as minister of outreach at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Births

Beach, Audrey Renee, Jan. 24, to Mark and Naomi (Vlok) Beach, Lancaster, Pa.

Brenneman, Mikayla Lynn, Jan. 22, to Ryan and Sherri (Enns) Brenneman, Longmont, Colo.

Gerber, Justin Mark, Jan. 17, to Kathy (Mast) and Mark Gerber, Fairview, Mich.

Gerig, Kaelin Faith, Dec. 28, to Brenda (Krabill) and Russell Gerig, Albany, Ore.

Hall, Maya Rachel, Jan. 13, to Kerry (Stutzman) and Steve Hall, Mexico.

Hooley, Bailey Jordin, Dec. 25, to Casey and Tanya (Rice) Hooley, Albany, Ore.

King, Jackson Yoder, Jan. 31, to Jennifer (Yoder) and Tillman King, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Kyle James, Jan. 3, to Kent and Lori (Mast) Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.

Minder, Joseph Levi Penner, Jan. 28, to Rich Minder and Vicki Penner, Newton, Kan.

Moyer, Benjamin Blake, Jan. 31, to Jeff and Karem (Sandoual) Orellana, Kitchener, Ont.

Spence, Kelsey Renee, Jan. 7, to Harold Spence and Kimberly Long, Harrisonburg, Va.

Yoder, Caleb Matthew, Jan. 27, to Debra (Clark) and Rodney Yoder, Reedsville, Pa.

Yoder, Grace Claire, Jan. 27, to Brent and Lorie (Sommers) Yoder, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Currier/Graber: Colene Currier, Burr Oak, Mich., and Justin Graber, Nappanee, Ind., Dec. 18.

Fougeron/Martin: Travis Fougeron, Milford, Neb., and Jennifer Martin, Newton, Kan., Jan. 15 at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Newton.

Kropf/Leichty: Valonda Kropf, Harrisburg, Ore., and Matthew Leichty, Albany, Ore., Dec. 18 at Plainview Mennonite Church, Shedd, Ore.

Deaths

Fry, Joe, 83, Middlebury, Ind., died Dec. 26 of cancer. Spouse: Lena Stutzman Fry (deceased). Parents: Amos and Sara Ann Yoder Fry (deceased). Survivors: children Ivan, Wayne, Lloyd; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; seven stepgrandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

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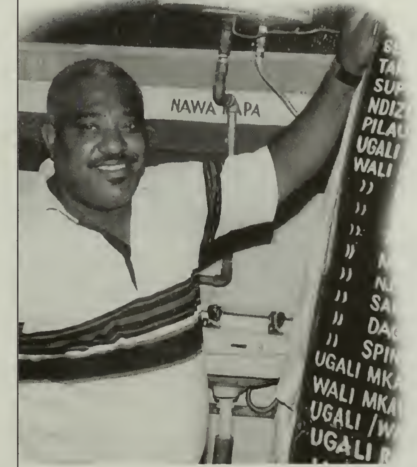

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Hartzler, Mary, 94, Dayton, Va., died Jan. 14. Spouse: Benjamin Hartzler (deceased). Survivors: children Eugene, Ernest, Lois Runyan, Martha Rohrer, Maxine Zook, Florence Showalter, Bertha Showalter, Alice Hostetter; 17 grandchildren; 39 great-grandchildren; five stepgrandchildren; nine stepgreat-grandchildren. Funerals: Jan. 17 at Dayton Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.; Jan. 18 at Slate Hill Mennonite Church, Camp Hill, Pa.

Heinrichs, Katherine Warkentin, 97, Henderson, Neb., died Feb. 2. Spouse: Gustav Heinrichs (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Helena Brown Warkentin (deceased). Survivors: children Delbert, Elvis; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 5 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Hirsh, William, 80, Barto, Pa., died Jan. 25 of a stroke and heart problems. Parents: Charles and Laura Conrad Hirsh (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 31 at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.

Kinsinger, Russell, 92, Kalona, Iowa, died Jan. 27. Spouse: Ella Kinsinger. Parents: Kores and Emma Martin Kinsinger (deceased). Other survivors: children Marilyn Slaubaugh Fisher, Myrna Farraj; seven grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 30 at Kalona.

Martin, Helen Leatherman, 85, Souderton, Pa., died Jan. 30 from asthma complications. Spouse: Wayne Martin. Parents: Harvey and Katie Detweiler Leatherman (deceased). Other survivors: children Beryl, Mary Ann Kinney, Floyd, Carolyn Cardin; eight grandchildren; six great-grandchilden. Funeral: Feb. 2 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Mishler, Slater, 88, Johnstown, Pa., died Jan. 29. Spouse: Cora Eash Mishler. Parents: Edward and Lizzie Stahl Mishler (deceased). Other survivors: children Duane, Lois Shaffer, Paul, Martha Miller, Miriam Cochran; 20 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 1 at Blough Mennonite Church, Hollsopple, Pa.

Ramseyer, Paul, 85, Orrville, Ohio, died Jan. 27. Spouse: Faye Mast Ramseyer. Parents: John and Mae Raeder Ramseyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Lynn, Donna Mills; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 31 at Orrville Mennonite Church.

Roth, Ada Birky, 94, Albany, Ore., died Dec. 24 of a stroke. Spouse: Amos Roth (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Amelia Birky (deceased). Survivors: children Sterling, Kenneth, Glen, Mary Martin; 17 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 29 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.

Rupp, Helen Maurine, 88, Newton, Kan., died Jan. 24. Parents: Otto and Stella Haury Rupp (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 28 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Stutzman, Emma Schlabach, 96, Goshen, Ind., died Jan. 9. Parents: Chris and Lydia Miller Schlabach (deceased). Survivors: children Doris Whitfield, Alice Hodgdon, Jeanette Camp, David; 18 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Yoder, Ruth Yoder, 99, Belleville, Pa., died Dec. 4. Spouse: Thomas Yoder (deceased). Parents: Amos and Salome Yoder Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Richard, Ruby Snyder, Sara Frey; 17 grandchildren; 40 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Valley View Haven Chapel, Belleville.

Young, Lizzie Halteman, 98, Harleysville, Pa., died Jan. 22. Spouse: John Young (deceased). Parents: Isaac and Lizzie Clemens Halteman (deceased). Survivors: children Ruth Shisler, Dorothy, Darlene; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 26 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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29 churchwide gatherings are planned throughout the United States, March-June 2000. Join the celebration for the church God is forming among us!

March 5, First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS. Speaker–Duane Beck
March 12, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, PA. Speaker–Michael Banks
March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA. Speaker–Diane Zaerr
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson. NB, Speaker–Jim Schrag
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN. Speaker–Jonathan Larson
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN. Speaker–Owen Burkholder
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX. Speaker–Gilberto Flores

For more information contact Shelley Buller 316-283-5100 ext. 249
or e-mail ShelleyB@gcmc.org

March 5, First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS.
March 12, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, PA.
March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA.
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson. NB,
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN.
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN.
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX.
March 26, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN

April 2, Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA.
April 2, Norristown New Life Mennonite Church, Norristown, PA.
April 2, Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, PA.
April 2, Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, D.C
April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA.
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN.
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL.
April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FD.
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK.
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA.

May 5-7, First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO. (RMMC annual sessions)
May 7, First Mennonite Church, Morton, IL.
May 7, Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH.
May 14, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, OH.
May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA.
May 21, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA.

June 4, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD.
June 8-11, Casselton Mennonite Church, Casselton, ND. (NCC annual sessions)
June 11, Community Mennonite Fellowship, Corning, NY.
June 22-23, Moses Lake High School, Moses Lake, WA. (PNMC annual sessions)
June 24, First Mennonite, Reedley, CA. (PSMC annual sessions)

classifieds

- **First Mennonite Church**, Berne, Ind., seeks a full-time ***youth pastor***. Address inquiries/resumes by March 15, 2000, to First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-3108; email craig@firstmennonite.org

- **China Educational Exchange**, an inter-Mennonite program, is sponsoring a ***five-week teaching program in China*** this summer. One week of orientation and sightseeing in Beijing is included, and teaching experience is not required. For more information, contact CEE, 1521 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-6983; email ChinaEdEx@aol.com

- **Called to ministry?** Swamp Mennonite Church in rural southeastern Pennsylvania, one hour north of Philadelphia, seeking full-time ***associate pastor of youth ministries***. Utilize your gifts in our Anabaptist community.

  Send resume to Swamp Mennonite Church, attn. Search Committee, 2125 Rosedale Road, Quakertown, PA 18951; email swamppb@fast.net

- **Mennonite Central Committee** invites applications for the position of ***human resources manager*** for Ten Thousand Villages, Akron, Pa. This position carries responsibility for development and implementation of policies, hiring, placing and development of staff.

  Direct inquiries to Dwight McFadden, MCC, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-1151; email djm@mcc.org

- **Albany Mennonite Church**, Albany, Ore., is seeking applicants for a full-time ***lead pastor*** beginning summer 2000. This congregation of approximately 125 is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley, 70 miles south of Portland. Applications accepted through March 31.

  Contact Larry Hauder, Conference Minister, 2028 N. 16th St., Boise, ID 83702; 208-336-5646; email lhauder@compuserve.com

- **Freeman Academy**, grades 5-12 with enrollment of 60-100 students, seeks ***principal/teacher*** (Bible and/or other). Freeman Academy has a heritage of 100 years in a rural setting of nine Anabaptist churches with special gifts and love of song and theater.

  Address inquiries and application by March 31 to Search Committee, attn. Stan Ortman, 44574 280th St., Marion, SD 57043; fax 605-925-4271.

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, Reinholds, Pa., seeks a full-time ***youth/associate pastor***. Youth work and preaching experience a plus; should have general agreement with Anabaptist teachings and a strong evangelically-based faith commitment.

  Inquiries/resumes to Search Committee, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 341, Reinholds, PA 17569; 717-336-6130; emmanuelmc@desupernet.net

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** (MMA) is seeking an ***assistant investment manager*** to manage the fixed-income portfolios for MMA Capital Management and short-term bond portfolios for the Mennonite Foundation. Will also provide financial analyst support for all fixed-income portfolios. Qualified applicants will have strong analytical skills. MBA or MA in economics and portfolio management experience preferred.

  Send or fax resume to MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527-0483; fax 219-533-5264; email Cyndeedb@mma-online.org

- **Souderton Mennonite Homes**, a growing Continuing Care Retirement Community, is seeking a part-time ***associate pastor*** to join our full-time pastor. Key responsibilities will include the assessment and ongoing nurture of our residents' spiritual needs. CPE training and experience with older adults preferred.

  Interested individuals should fax resume with salary requirements to 215-723-9876 attn. Lisa Peirce, or mail resumes to Souderton Mennonite Homes, 207 W. Summit St., Souderton, PA 18964.

- **Lancaster Mennonite Middle School**, which will open for students August 2000, needs ***teachers***. The school is connected with Lancaster Mennonite High School. Its mission is to provide a Christ-centered quality education in a nurturing environment where students grow personally, socially and spiritually.

  If interested, please contact Richard Thomas, 717-299-0436; or email thomasjr@lmhs.com

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** seeks ***administrator*** beginning August 2000. Requirements: master's in education or administration and five years teaching experience. K-8 Christ-centered education within Anabaptist framework. Enrollment 240; semi-rural section of Lancaster County, Pa.

  Apply to Board Chairman, Lititz Area Mennonite School, 1050 E. Newport Road, Lititz, PA 17543.

- **Hesston College** seeks innovative individuals with commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite church for the following full-time positions available Aug. 11:

  Art instructor to teach a variety of courses which may include painting, drawing, graphic design, photography, ceramics and art appreciation. Specific assignments will depend on the strengths of the candidate hired. MFA preferred.

  Computer instructor to teach a variety of courses in the fields of web authoring and design, Microsoft business applications, database, networking and programming. Graduate degree preferred. Hesston College will support the candidate in the pursuit of professional certifications (CNE/CNI, MCSE/MCT).

  Teaching experience required. Contact Marc Yoder, Academic Dean, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8206; marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is seeking a ***sales manager for Pennsylvania*** to promote and sell ShareNet Employer Plan products (primarily group health) to employers in Pa. and surrounding areas. Qualifications include experience selling a financial or service product, self-motivation and good communication skills. Current license to sell health and life insurance in Pa. is preferred. MMA offers a competitive salary, excellent benefits and a positive work environment.

  Please submit letter of interest and resume to: Human Resources, MMA, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; cyndeedb@mma-online.org; fax 219-533-5264.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, with a minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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- **Mennonite Central Committee** is recruiting for the position of ***director of human resources***. Skilled and dedicated Christians are MCC's "most important resource." The MCC director of human resources provides overall leadership for recruiting, selecting, training and supporting MCC workers throughout the world.

Qualifications: All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership, and nonviolence peacemaking. Qualifications for this position include bachelor's degree (master's degree preferred), experience in personnel management and administration, public speaking and writing skills, cross-cultural work experience preferred, and prior Christian service experience preferred.

This is a three-year salaried or voluntary service position at the MCC binational headquarters in Akron, Pa. For more information, or to receive a copy of the job description, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at 717-859-1151, Mennonite Central Committee Human Resources Department, or email them at psd@mcc.org or gpk@mcc.org. The last day to receive applications is March 17, 2000. Candidates from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds and/or bilingual (Spanish/English) candidates are encouraged to apply.

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- **Goshen College** is seeking a ***library director*** of the Harold and Wilma Good Library, an individual with proven leadership abilities, including administrative and budgetary management of library resources and services, hiring and supervising staff and developing program. Leadership experience and excellent communication skills are mandatory. Candidates must demonstrate knowledge of technological applications to academic libraries, issues and trends in higher education, and a vision for the creative integration and management of emerging technologies, print resources and services. An MLS degree from an accredited program is required. A doctorate or second master's degree in an academic field is highly preferred. Substantial managerial experience in an academic library required, including strategic planning, fiscal management, information technology, instruction and reference. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

Please send letter of application, curriculum vita and three letters of professional reference to Paul A. Keim, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings." Review of applications will begin Feb. 23, 2000. The position will remain open until filled. Faculty responsibilities begin July 1, 2000.

- **Goshen College** is seeking a faculty member to provide visionary leadership and to teach courses in ***journalism, writing, reporting, editing*** and additional courses as appropriate to the communication and theater department needs and the candidate's areas of expertise. This is a full-time position, with a view to tenure, dependent on continuing growth of the department. Doctoral degree in journalism, communication or closely related area is strongly preferred. Exceptional candidates who are ABD will be considered. Teaching experience is required and additional experience as a professional communicator is preferred. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

Please send letter of application, curriculum vita and three letters of professional reference to Paul A. Keim, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings." Interviews will begin after March 1, 2000, and continue until the position is filled. Faculty responsibilities begin Aug. 15, 2000.

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by Gordon Houser

A list of recent books, videos and CDs that may be helpful in our Christian lives:

Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior by Arthur Paul Boers (Alban Institute, 1999, $14.95) shows how a better understanding of difficult behavior can help congregational leaders avoid the trap of labeling parishioners and exercise self-care when the going gets rough.

When the Soul Listens by Jan Johnson (Nav Press, 1999, $10) guides readers away from formulas and step-by-step plans toward true contemplative prayer. The author focuses on finding rest and guidance in God through understanding silence and solitude, developing a listening heart and cooperating with God.

Beauty for Ashes: Biblical Help for the Sexually Abused by John Coblentz (Christian Light Publications, 1999, $5.95) leads the reader to healing and hope with clear, honest and practical advice.

Deliver the Ransom Alone by Verda Glick (Christian Light Publications, 1999, $6.95) is an account of the kidnapping of missionary Eli Glick in El Salvador, Christians' fervent prayers and God's faithfulness.

She Said Yes: The Educational Video Documentary and Discussion Guide for Faith Communities by Michael Popkin and Kathryn Vander (Active Parenting Publishers, 1999, $89.95 plus shipping and handling) is based on the book *She Said Yes: The Unlikely Martyrdom of Cassie Bernall* by Misty Bernall after her daughter's death at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo.

John Updike and Religion: The Sense of the Sacred and the Motions of Grace, edited by James Yerkes (Eerdmans, 1999, $24), probes the religious dimension of Updike's prodigious literary vision. Updike himself and 15 scholars contribute essays.

Rembrandt's Jesus: Meditations on the Life of Christ by Tony Maan (CRC Publications, 1999, $19.95) views the ministry of Jesus through the eyes of one of the world's greatest artists. It includes 11 full-color reproductions.

How to Keep Laughing—Even Though You've Considered All the Facts by Richard Deats (Fellowship Publications, 1999, $9.50) is a collection of jokes and humorous stories under chapter headings such as "Peace Movement Humor," "Russian Around," Civil Rights and Anti-Apartheid Humor" and "Tom Swift Jokes."

Hymns of Rejoicing and *Songs of Inspiration* are CDs with digitally remastered music from the original "Mennonite Hour" choral groups, available from Mennonite Media. Call 800-999-35334 or email <loish@mennomedia.org>.

101 Devotionals With Children by June Galle Krehbiel (Herald Press, 1999, $9.99) are suitable for family, personal, group or congregational worship. Each devotional contains a Bible reading, key verse, reading and prayer.

Love All Around This World: Peace Songs for Kids by William Jolliff (available on cassette from The Center for Peace Learning, George Fox University, 414 N. Meridian, Newberg, OR 97132, no cost listed) mixes bluegrass, country and folk and teaches peace.

Salt & Sign: Mennonite Central Committee in Palestine, 1949-1999 by Alain Epp Weaver and Sonia Weaver (MCC, 1999, no cost listed) chronicles Mennonite Central Committee's work in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, from refugee aid in the 1950s to assisting the disabled and economic development in the 1980s and '90s. Order from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500.

Garden in the Wilderness: Mennonite Communities in the Paraguayan Chaco, 1927-1997 by Edgar Stoesz and Muriel T. Stackley (CMBC Publications, 1999, $24) tells the story of Mennonites' presence in the Paraguayan Chaco, their difficult development of communities out of a wilderness, their relationships with the native peoples there.

The Genesis Message: A New Look at the Old Stories by Harvey A. Smit (CRC Publications, 1999, $7.45) features 20 stories from the Bible's first book and encourages readers to learn more about God's ways of dealing with us.

Practicing Truth: Confident Witness in Our Pluralistic World, edited by Linford Stutzman and David W. Shenk (Herald Press, 1999, $15.99), includes essays by people committed to Jesus' nonviolent mission that explore how Christians must recover confident witness to Christ.

Recommended reading

Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World by Robert E. Webber (Baker, 1999, $15.99) argues that "you can best think about the future of the faith after you have gone back to the classical tradition." Webber wants to address the concerns of a postmodern audience by going back to what he calls classical Christianity. He presents a helpful overview of the modern and postmodern worldviews, then offers a "classical/evangelical response." He covers a lot of material that may be old hat to students of church history but helpful to others. One problem with the book is that it is too simplistic, too neat and tidy. He uses sociological analysis when it suits him, ignores it at other times, treating early church history as a kind of monolith. Still, it's a hopeful book that raises good questions about what kind of church we should be. Webber is worth engaging and learning from.—*gh*

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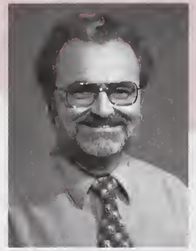

J. Lorne Peachey

Twenty for the 20th century

I remember the first time I got a compliment. I didn't know what to do with it. "Oh, it's nothing," I said when someone praised something I had written. But a wise elementary teacher heard that exchange. "Yes, it *was* something," she said. "When you get a compliment, say thank you."

Profuse compliments were not something I grew up with. Not because my parents or my community didn't appreciate who I was or what I did. But their emphasis was on not thinking more highly of oneself than one ought to think. Equality and humility had more value than individual recognition.

The same may be true of the collective Mennonite psyche. The ink was scarcely dry on our Dec. 7 issue, in which we invited readers to nominate names for the most influential Mennonites of the 20th century, before reactions began to come in.

These were women and men who believed in something so strongly that they made it their life's passion—and in doing so changed the church in dramatic ways.

This is a worldly exercise, we were reminded. Jesus condemned the disciples when they tried to figure out who was the greatest. And Mennonites are a community, not a group of high-achieving individuals.

But others commended us for wanting to give recognition for commitment to the church and hard work on its behalf. Some were also delighted we were calling attention to people who could be heroes and models for our future. (For more reactions, see pages 6 and 7.)

These responses sent us back to the drawing board. But as we reviewed the century just past, we continued to be convinced of the importance of taking note of the significant influences on the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church in the last 100 years. One way to analyze and understand these influences is to recognize the people who had been instrumental in bringing them about.

The 20th century was a dynamic one for North American Mennonites. Perhaps more than in any other time since the 16th century, we faced significant changes as God took us out of more isolated, comfortable communities and thrust us into dynamic engagement with our world. Behind that movement were people who heard a call from God and who, in faithful response to that call, helped the church see beyond where it was to something better. These were women and men who believed in something so strongly that they made it their life's passion—and in doing so changed the church in dramatic ways. Witness how peace, more-with-less and missions, for examples, have become common values among us.

As we researched our list of influential Mennonites, we also came to realize the need for heroes and models from among ourselves. All of us, whether consciously or unconsciously, have people after whom we model our lives. Surely some of these should come from within our own community, both for ourselves and for our children. Yet Mennonites have written very few biographies of the church leaders of our past. Perhaps what appears in this issue can help us realize the wealth of models for living that can come from our own tradition.

We also worked up our list of those who have had a major influence on the church during the past century because we believe that only as we understand where we have come from will we be able to chart a path for our future. Being faithful to God's call for us as Mennonites for the next century depends in no small part on understanding both faithfulness and unfaithfulness in our past. Both are wrapped up with people, people we need to know and attempt to understand.

Our list is by no means complete. Important people in our history are sure to be left off. Even were we to list all 140 names submitted to us by our readers, that would still be true. But we offer our list on pages 4-7 as a beginning way to say thank you to some who have helped the Mennonite church to follow more nearly God's call for us in the past 100 years.

The ultimate thank you will, of course, come in heaven. Some on our list have already experienced that, others are still living and working among us. We believe that, as a church, we should also give thanks now. For jobs well done. For lives God has used to make a difference.—*jlp*

No issue next week. The staff of *The Mennonite* will rest on Leap Year's extra day, Feb. 29. Our next regularly scheduled issue will be dated March 7.

the Mennonite

March 7, 2000

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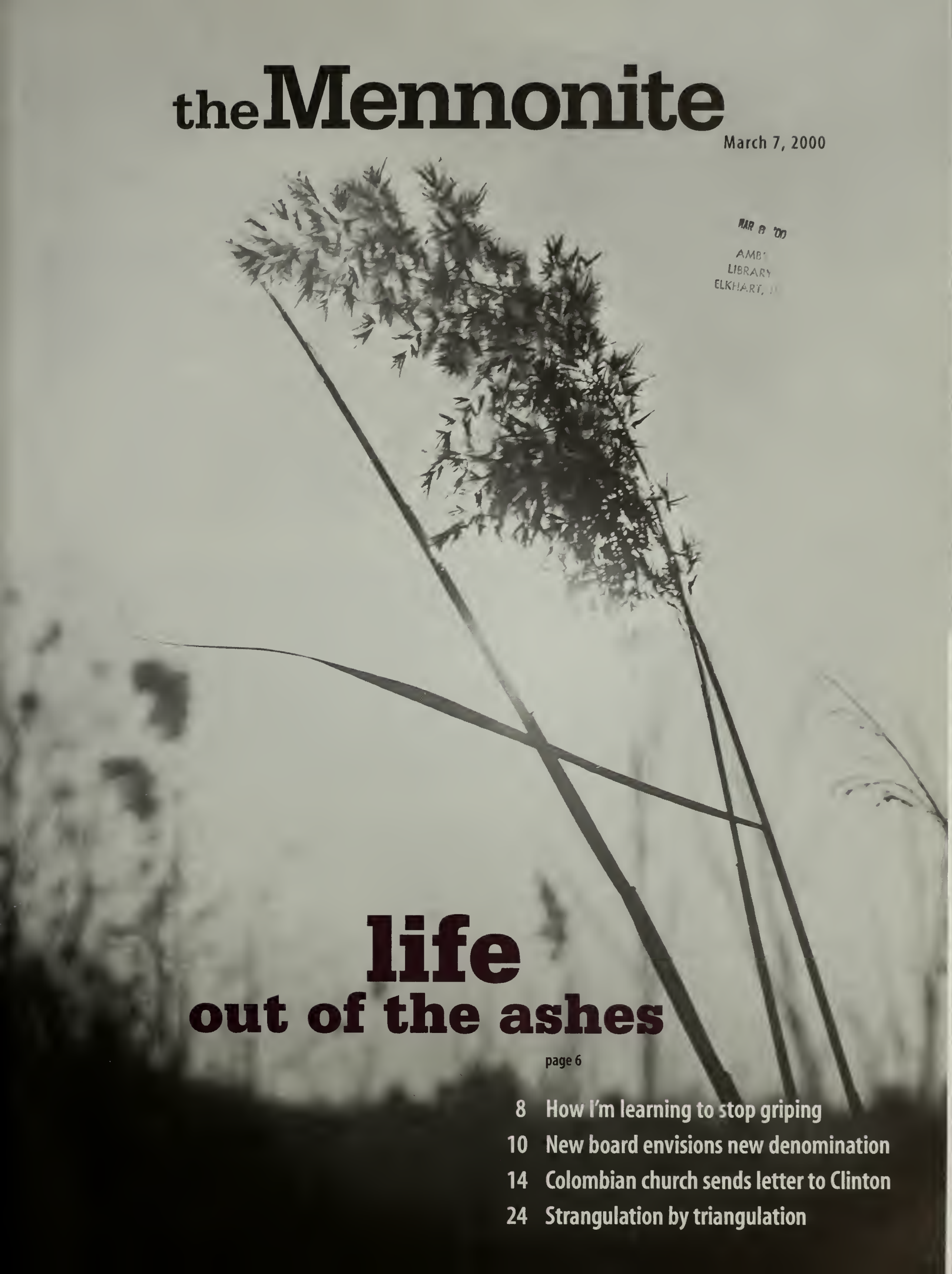

life out of the ashes

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Remembering the Sabbath

Nourishing! That's what I experienced after reading the articles on the Christian Sabbath in the Feb. 1 issue ("Remember the Sabbath" and "Rethink the Sabbath for Today"). I believe a creative use of the Christian Sabbath could be a spiritually renewing experience among us.

When I was a child, our family, in addition to our regular attendance at church, did a lot of visiting. Today my wife and I find Sunday afternoon a good time to drop in on shut-ins, friends and neighbors. People enjoy a spontaneous visit, plus we are equally blessed and rested. My parents also encouraged us to get our work done by Saturday noon so we could prepare for and anticipate the Sabbath. We were encouraged to study our Sunday school lesson ahead of time. Our family made Sunday special as a day of worship, rest and fellowship. That was before TV and Sunday shopping. Do TV, sports and shopping rob us of much of God's real design for the Sabbath?

As Gerald Gerbrandt said regarding the renewal of the Christian Sabbath ("Rethink the Sabbath for Today"), "Perhaps this could be a major agenda item for the new Mennonite Church."

I'd vote for a series on the other nine commandments. Some see these as negatives. I think not. I believe they are positive expressions of a life lived in harmony with God's expressed will. They will keep us out of the slavery to these wrongful lifestyles.—*Eugene K. Souder, Grottoes, Va.*

I am also old enough to remember when Sundays were taken more seriously than today, even by the secular society. No stores were open for people to go shopping. And what about the habit of people going to a restaurant to eat on Sundays after they have been to services so they don't need to cook dinner. Others have to go to work Sunday morning instead of attending services so these churchgoers can eat.

In Numbers 15:32-36, we read about a man who was gathering sticks on the Sabbath. He was brought to Moses and Aaron and the whole assembly. The Lord told Moses that he must die, so they took him out of the camp and stoned him. In Exodus 16:14-30, when God's people were given manna to eat, they were only to gather one day's supply except for Saturday. Then they were to gather enough for two days because they were not to gather on the Sabbath.

Of course, we're not living under the old law. But I think we as a nation and people were blessed in the days that Sunday was observed more than it is today.—*Ruth Stauffer, East Earl, Pa.*

Re the Sabbath: Paul, on behalf of Christ, wrote in Colossians 2:16-17: "From now on, never let anyone else decide what you should eat or drink, or whether you are to observe annual festivals, new moons or Sabbaths. These were only pale reflections of what was coming: the reality is Christ" (Jerusalem Bible). In Romans 6:14, Paul wrote, "You are living by grace and not by law" (Jerusalem Bible). In Galatians 3:23-5:1, he taught that in the past the people of God were under the guardianship of the law, but since Christ came, they are free.

We are to live in Son-shine, not the shadows or the ABCs of a historical kindergarten. We are living not by an external but an internal motivation. Hebrews 5:13-6:3 said it well, exhorting us to go into maturity if God permits. And God does.—*Jerry W. Sterchi, LaPorte, Ind.*

Teeing off

I want to thank Lynn Miller for his "Biblical Golf" article (Speaking Out, Feb. 15). Living closer to the Newton (Kan.) golf course than the Millers do to the Bluffton (Ohio) course, I read the article with more than passing interest. It was amusing, caused me to laugh and also caused me to reflect on the proper use of Scripture. I am uncertain of Miller's main purpose with this article. The old adage, "You can prove anything by Scripture if you don't quote too much of it" was certainly proven true. If his main purpose was to remind us to be careful how we use the Scriptures, he proved his point.—*Peter Voran, North Newton, Kan.*

Although the article on biblical golf was in jest, I really have difficulty in finding it worthy. We have enough problems of biblical quotations being used out of context in the more weighty matters that create plenty of confusion. I think our church magazine would do well to stick with articles that will help us grow as children of God. If I want to justify or enjoy leisure for any reason, I can go pick up a secular magazine.—*Clarence Stutzman, Wooster, Ohio*

Release from the rules

The disciple whom Jesus loved gave us the basis for unity in the Mennonite Church: acknowledging that Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 4:15). We spelled this out in more detail

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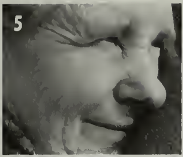

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y readers say

in our confession of faith, which we agreed upon in 1995.

In 1949, when Sara Jane, my wife, and I were being sent as missionaries to Ethiopia, our hearts rejoiced in the gracious bishops of Lancaster Conference who explicitly released us from the "Rules and Disciplines of Lancaster Conference." In response to our question, they made it clear that our appointment was to preach the gospel of Christ, not to apply the "Rules" to those across the sea. What freedom we felt! What an awesome responsibility!

God blessed the teaching of his Word. A young church came into being that faced questions pertaining to divorce, Christian attire, infant baptism, circumcision, the "ordinances," church administration and a host of other issues. As these matters were dealt with, the home church was true to its mandate. Decisions made by the young church at times were not easily affirmed by the sending church in America, but it did not interfere. The Holy Spirit has done a marvelous thing in multiplying the believers. The fellowship continues today.

The freedom we found on the mission field is the freedom we need if God is to bless our unity here. Must disagreements by sincere, God-fearing Mennonites lead to dissention and division?

I am dismayed by the talk of some, threatening to divide what the Holy Spirit conceived in the recent past as a beautiful union. My proposal is that if specific guidelines must be set for the "sheep," this can best be done in districts or congregations. To attempt such in the denomination or larger church body is counterproductive. The Holy Spirit hovering over the dark waters created unity with diversity. I believe it is seeking to do the same in the Mennonite Church. So let it be.—*Chester L. Wenger, Lancaster, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Vernon Sigl

Religious News Service

This is what we should learn from the *Star Wars* movies, the power of transformation, the power of love, not the power of weapons and violence.

—Doug Kaufman, "A Tale of Two Gospels," Feb. 8

Beautiful forest

Thanks for the masterpiece Feb.15 editorial on Psalm 1 ("Like a Tree, Planted by the Water"). It aptly described the Christian life as we experience it. Sometimes we may feel leafy and fruitful. Many times, though, we feel bare, stark, naked. The reminder of the seasons in a tree's life cycle encouraged us not to despair when the branches aren't loaded with fruit. The realization that we are sustained by the "water" of the "constancy of God's love, care and closeness" helps keep us rooted by that stream. We count it a privilege to be planted in "the beautiful forest known as the kingdom of God."—*Lois and Ernest Hess, Lancaster, Pa.*

Anarchy intolerance

In our Mennonite version of the gospel of peace, we go to great lengths to call for the end of all violence. Doug Kaufman's article in the Feb. 8 issue, "A Tale of Two Gospels," is an example. We put a lot of emphasis on the submissive sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and rightfully so, but the kingdom message does not end there. Not all humankind will accept this message and allow a transformation in their lives. What then?

In all the various interpretations of end-time prophesies, there is one thing we all agree on, and that is the judgment and destruction of the bad guys. Whether we want to admit it or not, violence and destruction are necessary tools for any organized group of people that expects to maintain law and order, which is every government's primary duty. As Christians, we should be thankful it is not in our job description to shoulder this responsibility.

As Christians, we have the duty to hold our authorities responsible in their use of violence, but we look foolish when we demand that they abrogate this right by disarming and refusing to use force. Let's not give the impression that we will tolerate anarchy.—*Harley Hofstetter, Dalton, Ohio*

Support and encouragement

Just a few words of encouragement for Amy Chupp, who wrote about women in church leadership (Readers Say, Feb. 8). Please be assured that there are many Christians in the Mennonite church who support you in following your call to use your God-given gifts of church leadership. As with Peter, who saw the vision that opened his eyes to God's impartiality (Acts 10:34), so today there are more and more Christians who see the vision of how the Holy Spirit is moving in our church. The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective supports women in leadership roles in the church. It is a matter of time until most of our congregations will understand the cultural aspects of this controversial issue of Bible doctrine. Issues such as the prayer head covering for women, the holy kiss, support texts for slavery and others have already been resolved. So will it also be with your situation. It is my prayer, and I am sure the prayer of many others, that God will richly bless you as you continue to follow your calling to use your gifts for our Lord.—*Edwin G. Moyer, Quakertown, Pa.*

Social work, religious work

Wider World in the Feb. 1 issue states that Roberts Wesleyan College "has launched the nation's first social work program designed to prepare students for work in church agencies and congregations." For more than 25 years, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Bluffton (Ohio) College; Goshen (Ind.) College; and Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., all have had social work programs that prepare graduates for work in our churches, church agencies and voluntary service organizations, as well as for work in the world of secular human services.

Whether one works in a church-related or secular institution, a holistic view of those we work with includes recognition and affirmation of their spiritual life. Through both required Bible and religion courses and social work courses, graduates of these programs are challenged to find authentic avenues to integrate their faith with professional practice. The fact is that preparing graduates for work in church agencies and congregations is not new. For many years well-prepared graduates from social work programs in Mennonite colleges have been entering church-related service work.—*Larry D. Friesen, Newton, Kan.*

On racism

In "The Call to Courage" (Jan. 11), Patricia Lehman McFarlane rightly reminds us of the racism in our Mennonite institutions and in society. In all she confronted us with, she did not mention a common form of racism taking place everywhere in our country. It is the killing of 1,452 black children by abortion every day. Blacks make up 12 percent of the population, yet they supply 33 percent of the abortion industry's business. Perhaps this is the most egregious form of racism. Let all Mennonites who love peace and justice raise their voices in loud protest against the ultimate form of racism—genocide, euphemized as a woman's choice. Or will we be the silent in the land as were many Christians in Hitler's Germany?—*David H. Clymer, Shirleysburg, Pa.*

In the dead of winter

by Sarah M. Brownsberger

Shall I of a surety bear a child, I who am old? —Genesis 18:13

Heraldic dream of flats, then a mound,
then knots of blood; instants later,
a beating heart. Dreams of fierce
sea floor wonders. When I wake, resigned
calm. This season too will pass.
The old skies roll, oh child to come.

What is new wine in an old sack
if not this? But God fed
my lungs breath. And the new
comes, the new, and the new—
earth and seas shall pass away.

My devotion takes hold.
Forsythia twigs bloom
in a February kitchen
and a woman who was tired
urges souls to life. This way, this way:
the cold and drought, searing pain,
hunger, despair, and betrayal
yield before you. See, child,
how it all wants to live, all
in the earth and the sea
and eternity.

Sarah M. Brownsberger lives in Watertown, Mass.

Vernon Sigl

New life grows out of th

by Jeff Nixa

Ashes. That is all that was left of Douglas firs, white tail deer, nesting hawks, trout, earth and rock when Mount St. Helens exploded in southwest Washington on May 18, 1980. The blast of steam and gases that blew out the mountain's north flank snapped 4 billion board feet of timber right off at the stumps and destroyed 200 homes and 185 miles of highways and roads, as well as vehicles and property. The mountain lake, crystal clear before the blast, rose 200 feet due to the ash, mud slides and the solid jam of downed logs that filled it. When the ash settled, all that remained of the pristine, snow-covered peak was a smoking crater as ominous and gray as a collapsed lung. The top 1,300 feet of the mountain, nearly a cubic mile of earth, was gone.

I was spiritually hungry and looking for a place for solid food and relatively healthy Christian community. I was not sure it existed, but the Mennonites suggested otherwise.

The environmental autopsy at Mount St. Helens was a dark one. The mountain was declared an environmental catastrophe. Whatever was alive before the blast now was buried under dozens, sometimes hundreds of feet of toxic, acidic ash. Nothing survived.

Ashes: I was not alive in the 16th century, when the Reformation erupted in Europe. The rumblings of church corruption and calls for change had been heard for years before. But the events of that era triggered a seismic reaction of belief and counter-belief, hope and hatred, innovation and destruction. When the dust settled, the body of Christ seemed as broken and splintered as ever. The Catholic Church of my family remained for centuries afterward in a state of shock and ecclesial martial law, unable to move, grow, repent or forgive. The virtues of all the churches were marked with the ashes of toxic resentment and fear of each other.

In my own family and church life, lesser eruptions of sin seemed to destroy our family unity through my parents' divorce when I was a teenager. As I grew into a young man, I experienced problems with Catholic parish life and later the politics of diocesan hierarchy as a campus minister. I found myself walking away from the Catholic Church, marked with ash, so to speak—ash of the flesh, of sin and death.

Then at the University of Notre Dame (South Bend, Ind.), of all places, where my wife, Regina, was studying for her divinity degree, we met two Mennonite graduate students. I had never met Mennonites. I distinctly remember, however, during the Gulf War, a radio announcement about a local Mennonite congregation holding a public forum on alternatives to war. This marked a striking contrast to the "Support the Troops!" fever raging in South Bend at the time.

Christian community: Later I became acquainted with Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (Elkhart, Ind.) students taking clinical pastoral education at Saint Joseph Medical Center in South Bend, where I worked as a Catholic chaplain. These Mennonites seemed down-to-earth, normal, unpretentious. Yet each possessed a palpable backbone of personal faith and integrity. To be honest, when I later decided against seminary at Notre Dame in favor of AMBS, it was not to become a Mennonite. Neither did I seek to separate myself from the Catholic body when, later, I walked into Kern Road Mennonite Church at the invitation of then-AMBS student André Gingerich Stoner (now a pastor at Kern Road). Rather I was spiritually hungry and looking for a place for solid food and relatively healthy Christian community. I was not sure it existed, but the Mennonites suggested otherwise.

Much has happened since then—on the desolate slopes of Mount St. Helens, in Christian polity and in my faith journey. On Mount St. Helens, within months after the eruptions, scientists noticed lichens and other primitive vegetation already appearing on the downed timbers and relocated boulders. I visited St. Helens with Regina in 1985, five years after the blast. I was amazed to see acres of trees flattened to the horizon, all lying oddly parallel to each other, all pointing away from the direction of the blast. But even more surprising was the new life popping up out of pure ash. I saw crabgrass, dandelions and wildflowers, even tree seedlings, stubborn and bull-headed enough to take reckless root in dead soil.

Apparently creation's grasp of possibilities was not as limited as that of science. Here's what happened. A seed is swallowed by a bird in one location. If not digested, it is ejected later in flight and drops to earth perfectly designed for survival in hostile environments. Unlike the biblical parable, many seeds don't need to fall on rich soil because they are wrapped in little jackets of fertile bird compost, perhaps even striking the earth with

March 8 is Ash Wednesday on the Christian calendar. Ash Wednesday, 6½ weeks before Easter, marks the beginning of Lent. Services on this day often include the imposition of ashes on the forehead as a token of mourning and penitence. Lent (40 fasting days plus six feast days) is traditionally a time for repentance and reflection in preparation for the great feast of Easter.
—Gordon Houser

ashes of death

enough impact to make a dent in the dust, to gather a few drops of the next rain.

The soil on Mount St. Helens was still deadly. But there was another force at work on the mountain besides the power of sin and death. No one told creation to despair. No one told the spirit wind not to blow where it wished, upon which floated thistle seeds and hawk wings and clouds that continued to baptize and anoint the scarred mountain in rain and insulating snow. No one told the sun to stop shining and warming the unlikely soil each spring, melting the snow, cleansing the streams, rivers and even the mountain lake. Somehow, even fish have reappeared in that body of water, which is called Spirit Lake.

If reckless hope can move a mountain to healing, apparently it can even move Christian churches to do the same. I was surprised to learn last year that the Vatican has recently initiated new ecumenical dialogue with other Christian churches. Among the few to have responded so far are the Mennonites. Bishop Joseph Martino of the Philadelphia archdiocese co-chaired the historic consultation between Catholics and Mennonites last October in Strasbourg, France. According to him, there were big surprises on both sides of the table. The Catholics, he said, knew little about the Catholic persecution of Mennonites as described in *Martyrs Mirror*. Instead, the Catholics thought of themselves as persecuted, because many had been driven from Europe for religious freedom as well and were openly suspect in their Protestant neighborhoods during such times as President John F. Kennedy's election in the United States.

The Mennonites, on the other hand, were surprised to know about the role of Scripture in Catholic life and the movements since the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) that urge the study of God's Word in small groups, living the life of faith in community and sharing it with others in authentic mission and discipleship. Catholics have even come to strive actively more toward world peace and the absence of violence. In the 1983 U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on war and peace, John Howard Yoder is footnoted right next to Catholic monk Thomas Merton as two of the most significant authors on Christian pacifism in this century.

Mennonite circles: Then there is my own paradoxical experience as an ash-bearing Catholic wandering into Mennonite circles. Expecting to feel like a stranger, time and time again I found myself listening to yet another Mennonite comment on the virtues of Catholic spirituality, peace work or even liturgy. "You're Catholic? Oh, I just read Henri Nouwen's book on the prodigal son or Thomas Merton's *Seven Story Mountain*" or, "What true peacemakers you have in Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker houses and the Berrigan brothers."

I remember walking into the darkened AMBS chapel one year on Ash Wednesday. I nearly had to check my bearings, wondering if I had walked into a Catholic church during a eucharistic vigil. Candles burned everywhere, colors and tapestry flowed, people sang Taizé music from France. Ritual movements flowed around a life-size cross of tree limbs lying on the floor for students and faculty alike to kneel before in silent prayer. The only thing missing for a Catholic was incense (perhaps still a little too pagan for Anabaptist sensibilities).

At AMBS and Kern Road, instead of feeling like a papist among believers, I was treated with the dignity and respect I hungered for in my own Catholic Church as a layman with unawakened leadership and healing aspirations. And best of all, perhaps the biggest miracle for a Roman Catholic, I have learned from Mennonites how to talk about the Lord unashamedly and with personal conviction that washed away my own sinful, ignorant stereotypes of naive, soul-saving evangelicals.

In all this I had not a single experience of feeling pressured to leave Catholicism or even hurry up and make up my mind about denominations. Kern Road was not lacking conviction in membership issues. Rather, the congregation was sensitive to the fact that Regina is a Roman Catholic lay minister involved in Catholic parish life as a professional and as an individual. The great latitude I experienced at Kern Road to be who I was with all my conflicting religious obligations and unresolved questions is precisely what allowed me to stay at Kern Road. That latitude allowed me to provide some useful ministry for the members through starting a contemplative prayer small group and occasional preaching and teaching roles. I also provided pastoral counseling to a

Instead of feeling like a papist among believers, I was treated with the dignity and respect I hungered for in my own Catholic Church as a layman with unawakened leadership and healing aspirations.

continued on next page

New life continued

number of Kern Road members and couples through a counseling practicum at AMBS.

Good Samaritan: As I struggled to find words here for my gratitude to Mennonites during the past five years, a strong image came to mind. It was of that man going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, the one who is gravely injured by fellow humans on the road. Just as he was taken in and cared for by the Good Samaritan, Mennonites at AMBS and Kern Road cared for me. The Samaritan did not see first a Jew or a Samaritan but only the great need of the injured man. In the same way, I have not been asked first whether I was Catholic or Mennonite but rather how I could enrich the community that grows better Christians. Like the Good Samaritan, Mennonites even provided many coins for my continuing growth and education at AMBS: through the congregational matching grant scholarship and a health-care insurance co-support through Mennonite Mutual Aid. Each of these experiences was like sun and rain and rich soil for the seeds of my belief, leadership gifts and the borderless ministry into which I seem to be growing.

A great and unexpected Lenten miracle is happening—on Mount St. Helens, in Catholic and Mennonite church life and in my Christian walk. I am privileged to have walked into your world. So whatever responsibilities you have in your various roles to make this sort of spacious hospitality I describe happen in the world, in the name of Christ, keep it up. Border-walkers like me—who appear unannounced, marked with the ash of sin and hope—are not to be feared but welcomed, bandaged, nourished and prepared for ministry to bring about the borderless kingdom of God.

Border-walkers like me—who appear unannounced, marked with the ash of sin and hope—are not to be feared but welcomed, bandaged, nourished and prepared for ministry to bring about the borderless kingdom of God.

Jeff Nixa graduated last May with a Master of Divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. He lives in South Bend, Ind. He shared these reflections last year in an Ash Wednesday chapel service at Mennonite offices in Elkhart.

How I'm learnin

Don't get me wrong. I like pastors. But their company is not always edifying. Many ministerial meetings are gripe sessions. I too can excel at this.

When the Alban Institute asked me for a book proposal on difficult behavior, I drew up a detailed plan. Alas, they said I was still too raw from a church conflict and at risk of becoming permanently embittered. Years later, opportunities for healing bore fruit in my second book proposal, which Alban accepted (see box on page 9). This book reflects my slow conversion from griping.

Henri Nouwen helped reorient me. When I was burned out by a debilitating conflict, he lavished attention on me and listened carefully to my sad memories. Then he pressed home a new perspective. He stressed that my losses were great and that experience of betrayal in church is spiritually devastating. But Jesus experienced it by a friend and John of the Cross was imprisoned by fellow monks. All mystics suffered. This experience could free me.

"Find your center": Once, when I was griping, Nouwen said, "If people are using you, find your center." Responsible leaders do not wait for others to take care of us or resent them when they do not.

I brought three pastors to meet Henri for a one-day retreat. He made observations about Christian community: "One of the essential qualities of creating community is not to judge. Essential. Do not even in your heart figure out, 'He's just a jerk.' … As soon as you start dividing your parishioners into jerks and nonjerks, you're lost because community is primarily an interior thing. Everybody has to have a space inside. That doesn't mean you have to be stupid and let everybody walk over you. There should be compassion. People have to know that in your heart there is space for them."

The story is told of Moses ascending a mountain to confer with God. He complains at length about all the things the people do wrong. Finally, God gets tired and says, "Moses, you're more religious than I am."

In *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer warns against forming churches from "wish dreams." We may get more attached to dreams than reality. Dreamers may be proud, judging, pretentious, self-righteous crusaders. We become demanding of God, others and ourselves. Bonhoeffer welcomes disillusion as grace and warns against complaining about one's church to others or even God. We must examine ourselves.

o stop griping

by Arthur Paul Boers

My ministry once involved projecting what I felt a church should do and be and noting how it fell short. This prophetic imposition was an exercise in perpetual frustration for my congregations and me. James Dittes says our greatest progress happens not when dreams are fulfilled but when they are denied or disregarded. Then we can hear what he calls God's "call in the disruption," a marvelous phrase.

How God leads: I do not argue against visions, dreams or ideals, but we must discern how God leads, perhaps differently from our preferences. We need to discover our congregation's gifts. They might not fit our preferences but may be the appropriate place to focus energies. Pastors often lament (or gripe) that parishioners expect them to be perfect, but we pastors do the same with congregations.

Sometimes I marvel at being called to Bloomingdale Mennonite Church. When I came, only a few shared my passions. What am I doing here? I wondered. Now I see that perhaps because of differences in personality and gifts we are well-matched. We complement, affirm and challenge each other.

I was slow to recognize the importance of Bloomingdale's gifts. A newcomer helped me see. She moved often and was part of different churches. After a painful accident, she was overwhelmed by our care. She said, "I never experienced anything like this from a church before." Our congregation faces many tragedies and always rallies in impressive ways. This great ministry should not be written off by self-appointed prophets of what other great things an "ideal" church might accomplish.

Ministers do not get far with prophetic critique alone. Critiques may be pertinent, but they may also be projections of our needs. People need to hear first that we love, esteem and value them. When we offer genuine affirmations, we may also be able to encourage new directions of growth and challenge.

Once my primary question in pastoring was asking how God wanted me to change the church. Now I aim for a more prayerful stance, trusting that God is at work already, has been at work here long before I arrived and will continue once I go. Now I ponder, What is God doing here already, and how can I assist?

One of my spiritual homes is a monastery I have visited for 18 years and about which (I'm embarrassed to admit) I often complained. For years, I visited it monthly. The monks always welcomed me.

I moved farther away and visited once or twice a year. Many of the friendly monks moved, too. An introvert, I don't need much chatting, but an occasional friendly word was welcome, especially on retreats where I was going stir-crazy. The remaining monks were quiet and reserved and would barely make eye contact. I interpreted this as hostility and went less frequently.

Then I read that Benedictine monks are duty-bound to give guests space and as a rule not to engage in conversation. Quiet monks are being respectful. Monks that spoke to me may have been breaking rules.

I asked for a retreat. The reserved guestmaster wrote a friendly note: "I look forward to seeing you again." My welcome was reinforced upon arrival. The guestmaster did not ask how long I would stay but how long I could. Later, the abbot and other monks gave me a warm "welcome back." One waylaid me for a bear hug, telling me how good it was to see me. A card in my room read: "We hope you have a pleasant and spiritually fruitful stay. Please visit us again." I was impressed that this monastery charges nothing, not even recommending a minimal fee (which many monasteries reasonably do).

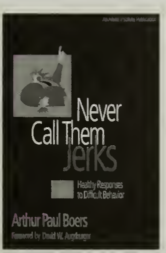
The monks were still reserved. But with a new perspective I saw what I had overlooked. I, not the monks, changed. I was less judgmental, more open, receptive and appreciative.

In *Works of Love*, Soren Kierkegaard tells of an artist who traveled the world, never finding anyone worth painting. Every face always had some fault, and so the artist sought in vain.

Another person did not claim any artistic gifts and did no traveling at all: "But remaining in the little circle of [people] who are closest to me, I have not found a face so insignificant or so full of faults that I still could not discern in it a more beautiful side and discover something glorious."

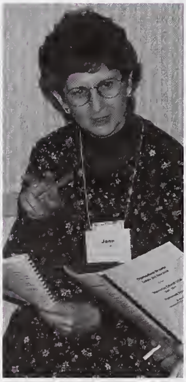
Once my primary question in pastoring was asking how God wanted me to change the church. Now I aim for a more prayerful stance, trusting that God is at work already.

Arthur Paul Boers is pastor at Bloomingdale Mennonite Church, Waterloo, Ont.


Never
Call Them
Jerks
Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior
Arthur Paul Boers
Foreword by David W. Augsburger

Never Call Them Jerks: Healthy Responses to Difficult Behavior by Arthur Paul Boers (Alban Institute, 1999, $14.95) shows how a better understanding of difficult behavior can help congregational leaders avoid the trap of labeling parishioners and exercise self-care when the going gets tough. It includes chapters such as "Naming, Blaming, and Shaming Games," "Turkeys and Burning Barns," "Trouble Is Our Business" and "Tuning Our Own Harpstrings." In his foreword, David W. Augsburger writes that when in seminary Boers "disturbed the surface layers of the Mennonite social contract which views community as *niceness* (denial), as *forbearance* (avoidance), as *considerateness* (distancing)." This book shows that Boers has not abandoned his ideals so much as refined them and learned much about "true community," which Bonhoeffer writes "is found in the place where the person you like least to be with always is."

Mennonite Church USA Executive Board members envision what new denomination might achieve


GCMC photo by Dave Linscheid

Jane Hoober Peifer, Mennonite Church USA Executive Board member from Lancaster, Pa., discusses church organizational plans at the board's Feb. 19-20 meeting.

CHICAGO—Leaders are dreaming big dreams for the new Mennonite Church USA. They hope the rest of the church will start dreaming along with them.

The dreams are found in an organizational strategy document that Mennonite Church USA Executive Board members approved in principle at their Feb. 19-20 meeting. It was the board's second meeting since delegates voted last summer to create it to replace the general boards of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

The 22-page document describes the vision, goals and organizing principles for the new denomination, expected to be formed next year. But it was a page of "milestones"—dreams for what the church might be able to do in its first decade, between 2001 and 2011—that got board members most excited.

"It's the milestones that bring it to life for me," said Cleon Claassen of Moses Lake, Wash.

The milestones were written by the Transformation Team, the 10-member group assigned to lead the GC-MC merger to completion next year.

A few of the dreams are:

- In 2002, a churchwide growth strategy is developed and a churchwide peace center is begun.
- In 2004, enrollment of Mennonite students in Mennonite colleges shows a marked increase as a result of churchwide tuition support plans.
- In 2007, a new transformation project begins with the goal of joining the Mennonite Church USA with some related Anabaptist groups.
- In 2011, a churchwide assembly celebrates partnerships with 10 Mennonite conferences from other countries. Also, a celebration of a decade of global mission is marked by new projections for the next decade.

Transformation Team member Donella Clemens said a title for the milestones might be, "Could you imagine?"

"We don't often do well at allowing ourselves to be imaginative about where God is calling us to go," she said.

Team members stressed that the milestones were not formal goals but ideas—"a first shot at it," said Jim Harder—intended to encourage others to do their own dreaming.

The milestones are ambitious, team member Karl Sommers said, because "these kinds of things really should stretch us."

Board member Lee Delp of Lansdale, Pa., said the milestones make the new church more tangible. "We have to give people a reason for the denomination," he said, "because they're thinking, 'We don't need you.' "

Said Transformation Team director Jim Schrag: "If we did not have transformation, each of these bodies [MC and GC] would have to reinvent themselves anyway. We have to have a document that takes localism seriously and turns it into a positive.

"Everything beyond the local has to earn its way—always has, but even more so now."

The document's first "assumption for a new organizational culture" is that "growth and nurture of congregations is the primary focus of all parts of the church."

Some of the organizational strategy document will be shared with church members in 29 congregational gatherings scheduled across the United States in the next four months.

The document was shaped by the results of a congregational study done last fall by almost 500 study groups in about 330 congregations. The document begins with a statement of vision that says the church is at "a historic crossroads when it becomes necessary to affirm a new unity of purpose and a new design for our relationships in order to be faithful to God and be Christ's ambassadors."

It describes core values and beliefs, opportunities and threats the church faces, some of the church's strengths and weaknesses, and core strategies.

One core value is to encourage interdependence, including building better connections with other Anabaptist groups in North America and with Mennonite World Conference members overseas.

In other meeting activity, Everett Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries, announced a fund drive to raise $800,000 by January 2001 to cover transformation expenses for 1999-2001. Thomas is chair of the fund-raising committee. The board also approved the creation of a six-member anti-racism team "to maintain an anti-racism presence" in the Transformation Team's work. *—Paul Schrag of* Mennonite Weekly Review

Finding God in Ecuadoran adventures

Visit marked by lost luggage, earthquake, civil unrest

QUITO, Ecuador—They experienced a mild earthquake. The airline lost some of their luggage. The threat of road blockades changed their itinerary. And two days after they left, a coup began.

In short, a Jan. 8-19 service and fellowship trip from the United States to renovate a church building in Ecuador didn't go according to plans.

In spite of the surprises, the building team members say the trip was a success. "If you would have told us before we left of all that was going to happen on our trip, I think all of us would have backed out," says Grant Nebel. "But God's hand was in all of this. … We stood amazed in the presence of God. On no part of our own, everything worked out perfectly."

Nebel and his wife, Edie, from Wayland, Iowa, led the 15-member building team on behalf of Iowa-Nebraska Mennonite Conference. Alex Naula, a native of Ecuador and a student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., accompanied the group. The team worked with church members in the village of San Antonio in the Andes Mountains to enlarge their church building. Iowa-Nebraska participates in a partnership with Christians in Ecuador and Colombia along with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

The group planned to arrive in Quito on Jan. 9, but only half the members received boarding passes in Houston, and no checked bags arrived with them in Quito. The rest of the group arrived the next day, also missing several checked bags, for a total of 17 missing pieces of luggage.

As they settled in for the night in Riobamba on the way to San Antonio, an earthquake struck. "I thought it seemed like the floor was moving, but I thought I was just tired or something," says team member Doyle Roth from Milford, Neb. "Later, we heard that there was an earthquake that registered 4.2 on the Richter scale."

In San Antonio, they worked with people from the congregation to finish the walls and floor of the church building. Group members with medical training assisted in one-day health clinics near the church. The team also worshiped with the congregation, which is part of an indigenous organization that has worked with Mennonites in the past.

On the last day at the construction site, the congregation prepared a large meal as a celebration of their time together. The Americans listened to stories about the difficult lives of indigenous people in Ecuador.

"They gave us their best, and probably for some, about all they had," says Karen Liechty from Mount Pleasant, Iowa. "As I sat there and ate, I wondered if we would be willing to give our best and possibly everything to someone else."

The group left San Antonio early because of threatened road blockades into Quito by indigenous groups. On the way back to the city, military personnel ordered the group off the bus at a checkpoint. After a luggage and passport check, the group continued on its way.

"They were looking for weapons, so they frisked the men and felt our luggage," says team member Rachel Good from the MBM Latin America staff in Elkhart, Ind. "We were soon on our way, but it made some of us uncomfortable, especially seeing young soldiers with automatic weapons in their hands."

The group spent the next two days painting at Quito Mennonite Church and also joined the congregation in worship.

At the Quito airport, security guards separated Mark Boshart of Mount Pleasant, Iowa, from the group, taking him to another building to search his luggage and ask questions. After carefully feeling the stuffing of two pillows in his suitcase, they released him. The group returned home without further incident.

On Jan. 21, two days after the team returned home, protesters numbering in the thousands stormed the parliament building and surrounded the presidential palace in Quito, demanding that the president step down and new economic policies be instituted. A new president was sworn in on Jan. 26.

"What was quite an adventure for us was everyday living for them," Nebel says. "In the uncertainties of life there was so much joy and thankfulness to God. As we journeyed through our seemingly out-of-control trip, we realized God surrounds us with his protection and love."—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

I thought it seemed like the floor was moving, but I thought I was just tired or something.

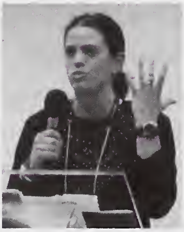
—Doyle Roth

MBM photo by Rachel Good

Karen Liechty has an impromptu language lesson with children in San Antonio, Ecuador. Liechty, from Mount Pleasant, Iowa, was part of a 15-member building team that went to Ecuador on behalf of Iowa-Nebraska Mennonite Conference.

Global church, global exchange program

New plan focuses on Mennonites outside North America



Meetinghouse photo by Rich Preheim

Johanna Suttor, an International Exchange Visitor Program participant from Germany, speaks at the Mennonite Central Committee annual meeting Feb. 18 during a celebration of IVEP's 50th anniversary.

HAMPTON, Va.—On Feb. 18, the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) annual meeting celebrated the 50th anniversary of the International Visitor Exchange Program (IVEP), which brings young people from around the globe to spend a year living and working in North America.

The next day, the MCC board unanimously approved a new exchange program that organizers hope will have the same effect as IVEP in broadening participants' world—an Anabaptist world that no longer has to revolve around the United States and Canada. The program, which would be a joint effort with Mennonite World Conference, now waits for MWC General Council approval this summer.

Tentatively called Global Exchanges, the program's focus would be placing young people from outside the United States and Canada in one-year service and learning assignments in locations other than the two North American countries. Less than 10 percent of participants and placements would be North American. Participants would preferably be Mennonite or Brethren in Christ and come from, and be placed in, countries with MWC member churches or MCC involvement.

"I look forward to having my grandchildren celebrate the 50th anniversary, not of the IVEP program, but of the Global Exchanges program," MCC executive director Ron Mathies told the board during the MCC annual meeting Feb. 18-19, hosted by Calvary Community Church in Hampton, Va.

The number of program participants and placements would be based on each continent's church membership, except for North America and Europe. About 55 percent of the world's Mennonites and Brethren in Christ live outside those traditional enclaves. In recent years, young people from overseas have requested an exchange program that bypasses the United States and Canada, said Ana Zorilla, director of MCC's Visitor Exchange Programs.

MCC initially would provide staff and funding, although Zorilla said she hopes MWC—a low-budget organization—would eventually contribute financially to Global Exchanges. Regardless, she said, MWC gives the program an international structure and ownership. "If it comes from MCC, it will be seen as a U.S.-Canadian program," Zorilla said.

The proposal sets up Global Exchanges for five years, starting Nov. 1. Five exchanges are scheduled for 2001, with five additional exchanges each year after that, reaching 20 in 2004. Budget for the five-year period is $322,652. Participants and their sending communities would be responsible for 50 percent of the participants' monthly stipend, although scholarship assistance would be available.

While adding a new program, the MCC board also took steps to spin off two existing efforts. Board members approved a resolution to separate Ten Thousand Villages from MCC as a nonprofit corporation, effective April 1. Long an MCC job-creation program, the operation has begun retail stores in vicinities without heavy Mennonite concentration, such as Northampton, Mass., and Princeton, N.J., last year. The lack of Mennonites in such areas makes it difficult for the store to hire employees who meet all of MCC's employment screens, such as beliefs compatible with Mennonitism. As a separate corporation, Ten Thousand Villages will be able to develop modified screens.

"One of the thoughts that underlies the structuring is staffing … flexibility," said Bruce McCrae, MCC director of administration and resources.

But that prompted board concerns that hiring practices could undermine Ten Thousand Villages' religious foundations. "This is a Christian organization in the Anabaptist tradition," McCrae responded. "[Employees] need to have a deep respect for that position, even if they don't agree with it in all its particulars."

Furthermore, such latitude would not be extended to people "determining policy and planning," such as executives and board members, said Yvonne Martin, chair of Ten Thousand Villages management committee. Such positions would need to be filled based on MCC screens, she said.

According to the memorandum of understanding between MCC and Ten Thousand Villages, MCC must approve any Ten Thousand Villages bylaws changes and the appointment of the organization's executive director.

The MCC board also cut its last formal ties with Mennonite Disaster Service, eliminating the provision that MCC approve changes to the MDS bylaws. That requirement had remained since MDS became an entity separate from MCC in 1993. MCC U.S. and MCC Canada still appoint members to the MDS board. The change is not expected to have any affect on the work of MDS, which will remain a fraternal organization of MCC.—*Rich Preheim for Meetinghouse*

Corrections: Mennonite Disaster Service was founded by Sunday schools from Pennsylvania Mennonite Church and Hesston Mennonite Church. That information was wrong in the Feb. 8 issue.

The Bethel College nursing program has been accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education since 1999 but has been accredited by the National League for Nursing since 1982. That information was wrong in the Jan. 11 issue.

Meetinghouse photo by Rich Preheim

At the Mennonite Central Committee annual meeting Feb. 18-19, Lamar Fretz, a longtime MCC volunteer and former board member from Dunnville, Ont., examines drawings and a model of the proposed orientation and meeting center on the campus of MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa. Plans also call for the construction of four residence facilities, each with a capacity of 22 people, to host orientees and visitors. About $1.5 million of the $2.4 million needed has been raised in cash and pledges. The project's total cost is estimated to be $4.5 million. Construction is expected to start this spring.

MCC records for income, expenses broken in 1999

HAMPTON, Va.—Last year was a record-breaker on both sides of the ledger for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), thanks largely to the agency's response to the destruction left by Hurricane Mitch in Latin America and fighting in the Balkans.

For its international work, MCC received $21.4 million in financial contributions and $14.3 million in material resources, spurring total income to $39.2 million—all records. International expenses also set an all-time high with $37.5 million.

MCC international activities in 1998 posted $28.7 million in income and $25.9 million in expenses.

In 1999, MCC spent $2.5 million in Honduras and $760,000 in Nicaragua for Hurricane Mitch recovery efforts. The storm prompted 14,000 donors to give to MCC for the first time. In the Balkans, MCC had expenses of $1.2 million. Some 55,000 refugee kits were also collected for the Balkans, 3,000 more than were received for victims of Mitch.

Last fiscal year's international, U.S. and Canadian activities generated records of $69.4 million in income and $66.9 million in expenses.—*Rich Preheim for Meetinghouse*

MCC U.S. reflects on year of changes

GRANTHAM, Pa.—Ecclesiastes proclaims that there is a time for everything, including change. Those words have been an apt description of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S.

The MCC U.S. board met Feb. 4-5 in Grantham to review the organization's work after the first year of regionalization. MCC U.S. began decentralizing in 1999, giving its four regional offices responsibility for programs in Appalachia, New Orleans, Philadelphia, south Florida, Washington, D.C., and Pine Ridge, S.D. Peace and justice staff will also be added to the regional offices, while a core of national staff remains based at MCC U.S. headquarters in Akron, Pa.

To open the meeting, Janet Weber, assistant director of MCC U.S. Community Ministries, gave a reflection based on Ecclesiastes. "Change is inevitable," she said. "MCC U.S. needs to change in response to a changing world while at the same time preserving core values and purpose."

West Coast MCC co-director Barb Buxman said the organizational changes have generated excitement in her office. "Our purpose is to provide staff to support local church groups and identify with and be accountable to our local constituents. MCC U.S. needs to be closer to churches."

The board and staff talked about trends that will affect MCC U.S. work in coming years. "It's time to move on from talking about structure to a discussion of our priorities," said board chair Harriet Sider Bicksler.

The dialogue resulted in a renewed commitment to anti-racism, anti-sexism, conciliation and peace, and relationship building.

In other meeting action, the board approved a $5,000 request from Hispanic church leaders to meet to discuss promoting Anabaptist education in Hispanic Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in North America and Puerto Rico. An earlier attempt to do so was started in 1996 but dissolved one year later due to lack of funds.

The board also met with the Brethren in Christ board, which was holding its annual meeting in Grantham at the same time.—*John M. Spidalieri of MCC News Service*

Justice goes to pot in Canadian office

Coffee drinkers at Mennonite Church Canada headquarters and Canadian Mennonite Bible College (CMBC) have decided they are willing to pay twice as much for their cups of java.

Earlier this year, the coffee pots in the Winnipeg office that houses both institutions were changed from Folgers and Maxwell House to "fairly traded" coffee.

"We buy directly from a Colombian cooperative of farmers," says Dan Wessner, CMBC political studies professor, who estimates consumption could be as much as 40 pounds a month. "Our purchase directly supports their industry."

He says the coffee is grown organically, and the money helps pay for scholarships for high school students.

"In class we discuss issues of economic justice," Wessner says. "Coffee growers are affected by our choices as consumers here."

Some CMBC students are exploring opening a "fairly traded" cafe on campus.
—*Canadian Mennonite*

Colombian Mennonite letter to President Clinton calls for 'investment in peace' for their country

BOGOTÁ, Colombia—Disappointed by the U.S. government's military involvement in their country's problems, the Mennonite Church of Colombia executive committee has sent a letter to President Clinton urging support of nonviolent alternatives.

Clinton in late January announced an aid package for Colombia providing $1.6 billion over the next two years. About $1 billion of that is slated for the Colombian police and military, providing units with anti-drug training, increasing intelligence capabilities and purchasing more than 60 helicopters.

Congress is expected to consider the proposal in the coming weeks.

"Our country has been trying war and weapons as a solution to its problems for centuries," the eight members of the executive committee write in their letter, dated Feb. 11. Such an approach, they say, "has brought an increase in the size and number of armed groups as well as one of the highest rates of violent deaths in the world" plus increased drug trafficking.

Many Colombians fear that such a large injection of weaponry and training will dangerously escalate violence that claimed 30,000 lives last year and has displaced 1.5 million people. Instead, the Mennonite Church of Colombia's executive committee is calling for support of judicial reform, economic development, alternatives to coca production and other plans. The executive committee called financial assistance for such measures, "a large-scale investment in lasting peace."

"While we acknowledge the need for international support in overcoming the problematic situation we find ourselves in as a nation, we are convinced that the time has come for a fundamental change in paradigm, leading to a refocusing of the initiative," the executive committee writes.

They are also appealing to U.S. Mennonites to advocate for them. "To our brothers and sisters in the United States, we ask your help in preventing the increased military involvement of your country in ours," they conclude, "which can only lead to increased suffering and pain for the Colombian people."—*MCC and MWC news services*

New parents group holds first retreat

Twenty-five parents of homosexual children attended the first retreat of the Faith, Hope and Love Network, a new organization for parents who want positive relations with their homosexual children but believe sexual activity between people of the same gender is wrong.

The retreat was held Feb. 19-20 at Carlisle, Pa. The facilitator was Enos Martin, psychiatrist and Lancaster Conference bishop. A second retreat is being planned for northern Indiana in late spring.

While created with encouragement from Mennonite church leaders, the Faith, Hope and Love Network is not a denominational or conference program.

Late giving puts GC budget into black

NEWTON, Kan.—As the 1999 fiscal year was ticking down, General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) officials were wondering if the conference would exceed its budget for the fourth consecutive year.

The wait was worth it, as strong year-end contributions pushed the budget into the black. Giving for the fiscal year, which ended Jan. 31, totaled nearly $4.8 million—106 percent of the amount budgeted.

"We had real questions into December about whether we would make budget," says GC business manager Ted Stuckey. "Giving from Canada was down, and we wondered if it had anything to do with the decisions at St. Louis 99, moving into a two-country, U.S.-Canada structure."

At the end of the year, however, Canadian receipts began flowing in. The conference received $78,000 (U.S.) more from Canada than in the 1998 fiscal year.

"This is certainly cause for rejoicing," Stuckey says. "The General Conference really needs continued Canadian support in this time of transition."

U.S. congregations also did their share, giving $105,000 more in 1999 than in the previous year.

"With the addition of estate gifts, it was almost a quarter of a million more [total received]," Stuckey says. "It was remarkable year-end giving."—*GCMC News Service*

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Anne Berry

Weighing in on spring

Using a homemade "sapometer," Goshen (Ind.) College biologist Larry Yoder weighs a bucket of maple sap on Feb. 18 and discovers that spring is supposed to arrive on Feb. 29. Yoder and other college scientists created the sapometer to forecast spring's arrival. The machine is based on a formula the group developed to measure the strength of winter vs. strength of spring, using data from sap from a tree on campus.

MCC worker may face charges in Thailand

Ediger

AKRON, Pa.—Max Ediger, a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker in Thailand, may be charged with harboring illegal immigrants following a Feb. 11 police raid of the Bangkok office of the human-rights organization with which he works.

Ediger, who has served in Thailand in a variety of assignments since 1978, works with Burma Issues, which provides assistance to refugees from Burma (also called Myanmar) and seeks nonviolent ways to end the country's 50-year civil war. Eight Burmese were found in the office during the raid and probably will be returned to the Thai-Burmese border. Burmese refugees usually cannot receive legal travel documents to be in Bangkok.

Ediger, a native of Turpin, Okla., was held for nearly a day before being released on bail, and charges have yet to be filed. He is being represented by a group of Thai lawyers. Ediger has since met with Thai intelligence and immigration officials.

Also detained were MCC workers Erich Miller of Goshen, Ind., and Lakhsmi Subandi of Tengah, Indonesia. They were questioned and released.

"Many nongovernmental organizations are using this opportunity to raise the issue of the power of nonviolent action," Ediger wrote in a Feb. 14 email to MCC headquarters in Akron. "It's a stressful time, but also one of the best opportunities I may ever have to share these concerns with a broader audience. I pray I'll be able to do it articulately and sensitively."

Thai intelligence officials say that a Burmese rebel killed by Thai police in late January had Burma Issues information in his pocket. The dead rebel was part of a group that had crossed the border into Thailand and seized a hospital. Thai police stormed the hospital, killing 10 rebels. This followed a 1999 incident when Burmese rebels entered Thailand and seized an embassy. The two incidents have created fear of Burmese terrorism within Thailand.

"Max knew his work was risky," says Betsy Headrick McCrae, MCC East Asia program director. "But he believes strongly that we need to stand with people who are suffering and need hope."—*MCC News Service*

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Pacific Southwest Conference
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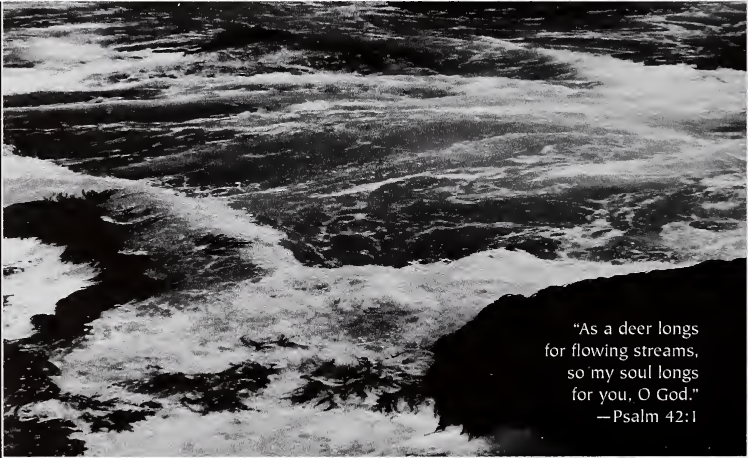
NATIONAL CLERGY *Renewal* PROGRAM



"As a deer longs
for flowing streams,
so my soul longs
for you, O God."
—Psalm 42:1

AT THE CENTER OF THE CONGREGATION IS THE PASTOR. Spiritual guide, scholar, counselor, preacher, administrator, confidant, teacher, pastoral visitor, and friend, a pastor has a privileged position and performs many roles. In season and out, a pastor is called upon to lead communities to the life-giving waters of God.

THE NATIONAL CLERGY RENEWAL PROGRAM, offered by Lilly Endowment Inc., is intended to strengthen Christian congregations by providing an opportunity for pastors to step away briefly from the demands of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection. The Endowment will provide as many as 100 grants of up to $30,000 each directly to congregations for support of a renewal program for their pastor.

Applications are now being accepted.

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Applications due August 1, 2000. Award announcement by December 2000. For information: Write Lilly Endowment Inc., Religion Division, 2801 North Meridian Street, P.O.Box 88068, Indianapolis, Indiana 46208 or send an e-mail to clergyrenewal@yahoo.com or call 317/916-7302. Indiana clergy should apply only to the Lilly Endowment Clergy Renewal Program for Indiana Congregations.

Ad urges church to bless same-sex relationships

NEWTON, Kan.—In a full-page newspaper ad last month, nearly 700 members of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church Canada called for the church to sanction covenanted, monogamous relationships between people of the same sex.

"We consider such unions loving expressions of the natural gifts of sexuality bestowed upon persons by the Creator … and that persons living in such unions should be included fully in the life of the church," states the ad, titled "A Welcoming Open Letter on 'Homosexuality' " and published in the Feb. 17 issue of *Mennonite Weekly Review,* a Newton-based inter-Mennonite newspaper.

Signatories included pastors, college faculty and staff members and laypeople from across the United States and Canada.

"We do take seriously those biblical texts that some interpret as precluding covenanted same-gender relationships," the ad continues. "After careful study, however, we have concluded that these texts do not address 'homosexuality' as we understand it today."

50 gather for first missiologists meeting

CHICAGO—Fifty mission workers, church agency staff, historians, writers and others interested in how Anabaptists approach mission work attended the inaugural meeting of the Association of Anabaptist Missiologists, held Jan. 20-21 in Chicago.

The meeting featured discussion of papers presented by Delores and J. Stanley Friesen, longtime mission workers in Africa now living in Fresno, Calif.; Wilbert Shenk, professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.; Lois Barrett, executive secretary of the Commission on Home Ministries, Newton, Kan; and Calvin Shenk, Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Israel and professor at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Participants addressed the distinctiveness of Anabaptist missions, the role of nonviolence and noncomformity, the impact of religious pluralism and the future of missions. They also discussed the shape of the new organization and ways to involve international voices.—*MBM News Service*

MCC video wins honors in festival competition

AKRON, Pa.—*Change of Command,* a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) video of stories of military veterans whose convictions clashed with their military duties, has been awarded finalist status in the 1999 International Film and Video Competition of the New York Festivals.

Change of Command, a 42-minute video, was produced by MCC in 1998. The International Film and Video Competition evaluates entries according to production values, presentation of content, inventiveness and overall effectiveness.—*MCC News Sevice*

Former Congo mission worker dies at age 91

GLENDALE, Ariz.—Helen Yoder Schnell, for 32 years a mission worker in the Congo, died Jan. 19 at Glencroft Care Center in Glendale. She was 91.

Schnell married her husband, Russell, on Sept. 25, 1932, and two months later they set sail for the Congo with Congo Inland Mission, forerunner of Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. The Schnells served with AIMM and the Commission on Overseas Mission until 1964. They then served pastorates in Ohio and Florida before retiring to Glencroft. Russell Schnell died in 1998.—*GCMC News Service*

MBM radio spots on peace win award

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Mennonite Board of Missions' Mennonite Media department has been honored for its "Real People, Real Peace" radio spots. The national Communicator Awards gave the spots its Crystal Award. "Real People, Real Peace," featuring true stories of Mennonites in active peacemaking, is aired on about 350 stations.—*MBM News Service*

by the way …

On a recent broadcast of the TV game show *Jeopardy,* contestants were asked to identify a "group related to the Amish, named for a Mr. Simons." No one knew the answer.—*Mennonite Quarterly Review*

LAURELVILLE MENNONITE CHURCH CENTER

Laurelville Mennonite Church Center presents:

Picture, Poem, Soul, Song

June 15-18, 2000

A retreat in the woods for poets and creative writers of all experience levels.

Resource Team:
Jeff Gundy, Scott Holland, Jean Janzen, Julia Kasdorf
Call 1-800-839-1021 for registration information.

E-mail: info@laurelville.org **www.laurelville.org**

Events

Family History Conference, March 24-25, Lancaster, Pa. Sponsored by Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society and Lancaster County Historical Society. Speaker: Frederick S. Weiser. Contact: 717-393-9745.

"Race and Public Policy," April 9-11, Washington, D.C. Sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office. Speakers: Wilma Bailey, Marisa Demeo. Contact: 205-544-6564 or wash@mcc.org.

Workers

Bjork, Stephen, Beverly, Mass., is beginning a one-year assignment with Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) as a program assistant in Alamosa, Colo.

Bontrager, Emily, Canton, Ohio, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a counselor in Seattle.

Brenneman, Kim, Telford, Pa., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as an urban gardener in Kansas City, Kan.

Hershberger, Molly, Millersburg, Ohio, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a social worker in Dallas.

Hiebner, James, Henderson, Neb., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS as a technical support technician in Americus, Ga.

Hodges, Alta, Twin Peaks, Calif., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS as a physician assistant in Hutchinson, Kan.

Kindlein, Jonathan, Wernigerode, Germany, is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS as a carpenter in Americus, Ga.

Moore, Deanna, Greenwood, Del., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a teacher in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Nivia, Ruben, Santafe de Bogota, Colombia, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a child-care worker in Americus, Ga.

Obando, Lina Maria, Santafe de Bogota, Colombia, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a conflict-resolution specialist in Americus, Ga.

Rataicheck Jr., Cletus, Reedsville, Wis., is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS as an accountant and maintenance worker in Washington, D.C.

Richer, Eric, Wauseon, Ohio, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a program coordinator in Brownsville, Texas.

Ruark, Heather, Harrisonburg, Va., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a paralegal in Harlingen, Texas.

Smith, Abigail, Gibson City, Ill, is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as an associate director in San Antonio, Texas.

Speyer, Ann, Grand Rapids, Mich., is beginning a one-year assignment with MVS as a volunteer coordinator in Oakland, Calif.

Teichrib, Andreas, Detmold, Germany, is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS as a Habitat for Humanity staff member in Americus, Ga.

Unger, Richard, Winnipeg, is beginning a two-year assignment with MVS as a computer lab director in Evansville, Ind.

Zuercher, William, Hesston, Kan., is beginning a one- to two-year assignment with MVS doing fund-raising and development in Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

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Births

Beck, Denver Alderfer, Jan. 21, to Kerry and Mary (Alderfer) Beck, White River Junction, Vt.

Belsley, Calista Ann, Feb. 8, to John and Katrina (Delicath) Belsley, Washington, Ill.

Brenneman, Amy Lynn, Feb. 3, to Jeremy and Tami (Webert) Brenneman, Iowa City, Iowa.

Burkholder, Kara Ann, Feb. 16, to Brian and Rachael (Janzen) Burkholder, Newton, Kan.

Davis, Amanda, Nov. 16, 1990, received for adoption Dec. 13, 1999, by Angie (Laird) and Tim Davis, Chambersburg, Pa.

Davis, Beth Ann, May 29, 1992, received for adoption Dec. 13, 1999, by Angie (Laird) and Tim Davis, Chambersburg, Pa.

Denlinger, Nicholas Shelton, Feb. 1, to Laura Shelton and Scott Denlinger, Tucson, Ariz.

Eby, Kylie Morgan, Jan. 1, to Bradley and Lisa (Bailey) Eby, Chambersburg, Pa.

Friesen, Kaelinn Renee, Feb. 11, to Barry and Rynette (Head) Friesen, Omaha, Neb.

Friesen, Noah Matthew Yoder, Feb. 14, to Matt and Teri (Yoder) Friesen, Wichita, Kan.

Horsch, Jacob Ryan, Feb. 7, to Amy (Stalter) and Grant Horsch, Fisher, Ill.

Kauffman, Renee Evalena, Feb. 11, to Helen (Byler) and Roger Kauffman, Allensville, Pa.

King, Ethan Samuel, Feb. 3, to Samuel King and Danelle Weaver, Indianapolis.

King, Owen Phillip, Feb. 11, to Natalie (Rupp) and Phillip King, Pettisville, Ohio.

Leaman, Caleb Benjamin, Feb. 2, to Phil and Ruth (Vogt) Leaman, Lancaster, Pa.

Lemon, Dakota Lee, Jan. 21, to Alicia (Wenger) and Jeff Lemon, Wayland, Iowa.

Lucas, Andrew James, Feb. 3, to Sarah and Tim Lucas, Hutchinson, Kan.

Lutz, Abigayl Paige, Jan. 25, to Ellen (Butcher) and Steve Lutz, Pennsburg, Pa.

Martin, Gabriel Nathan, Jan. 26, to Doug and Lydia (Ramos) Martin, Leola, Pa.

Mishler, Krist Diane, Feb. 1, to Glenda (Mullet) and Shane Mishler, Topeka, Ind.

Neufeld-Kreider, Annika Marie, Jan. 14, to Brad and Lisa (Neufeld) Kreider, Lebanon, Pa.

Raeburn, Andrew Robert, Feb. 4, to Beth (Suter) and Ray Raeburn, Bluffton, Ohio.

Rondo, Zachery Thomas, Feb. 10, to Donya (Handrich) and Thomas Rondo, Goshen, Ind.

Simms, Matthew Thomas, Dec. 19, to John and Tracy (Niedimyer) Simms, Stevens, Pa.

Stauffer, Luke Thomas, Feb. 10, to Michelle (Leayman) and Tom Stauffer, Marietta, Pa.

Swanson, Claire Marie, Jan. 15, to Bart and Kelly Swanson, Bloomington, Ill.

Unruh, Thane Allen, Jan. 31, to Julie (Hiebert) and Stacy Unruh, Hutchinson, Kan.

Weichman, Colten Robert, Jan. 18, to Bard and Judy Weichman, Bloomington, Ill.

Marriages

Christy/Graves: Larry Christy, Ottumwa, Iowa, and Audrey Graves, Bloomfield, Iowa, Jan. 25 at St. Christian Street Church, Davis City, Iowa.

Geiser/Hansel: Douglas Geiser, Wooster, Ohio, and Amy Hansel, Fairlawn, Ohio, Dec. 31 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Goodheart/Lehman: Scott Goodheart, Lowville, N.Y., and Pamela Lehman, Castorland, N.Y., Feb. 12 at First Mennonite Church, New Bremen, N.Y.

Hawks/Otto: Eleanor Hawks, Millersburg, Ind., and Jonas Otto, Millersburg, Feb. 12 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Heidelberger/Thieszen: Angie Heidelberger, Olathe, Kan., and Eric Thieszen, Olathe, Feb. 26 at Henderson, Neb.

Deaths

Baechler, Wilmer, 81, New Hamburg, Ont., died Jan. 30. Spouse: Frieda Mennetta Ropp Baechler (deceased). Parents: Christian and Annie Bender Baechler (deceased). Survivors: children Gloria, Arlene, Karen, Bruce, Murray; five grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 2 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock, Ont.

Basinger, Gerald, 91, Bluffton, Ohio, died Feb. 3. Spouse: Lela Oberly Basinger (deceased). Parents: Jesse and Evelyn Treece Basinger (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, Jo Ann Hilty, Betty Kantner, Colleen Wolf, Connie Sutherland, Judy Stall; 18 grandchildren; 40 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 8 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Birkey, Mary Ellen Wiles, 55, Paxton, Ill., died Jan. 26. Spouse: Warren Birkey. Parents: William (deceased) and Rena Wiles. Other survivors: daughter Sue Ellen. Funeral: Jan. 29 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Brenneman, Gertrude, 98, Hopedale, Ill., died Jan. 27. Parents: Edward and Laura Bender Brenneman (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 4 at Boynton Mennonite Church, Hopedale.

Buller, Stella Enns Ratzlaff, 85, Inman, Kan., died Jan. 29. Spouse: Vernon Buller. Parents: Abraham and Justina Ratzlaff (deceased). Other survivors: children Jimmy, Maribeth Gowen; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Dailey, Mattie Hundt, 95, Pekin Ill., died Jan. 22. Spouse: Ray Dailey (deceased). Parents: Herman and Minnie Hundt (deceased). Funeral: Jan. 25 at Tremont, Ill.

Deckert, Clarence, 91, Freeman, S.D., died Jan. 17 of heart failure. Spouse: Albena Graber Deckert. Parents: John and Agnetta Deckert (deceased). Other survivors: James, Janette Deckert Epp; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: Jan. 22 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Enns, Orlando, 86, Hillsboro, Kan., died Jan. 31 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Selma Unruh Enns (deceased). Parents: Henry and Maria Brandt Enns (deceased). Survivors: children Sharron Schutte, Karen, Robin; two stepgranddaughters. Funeral: Feb. 3 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan.

Gahman, Melvin, 96, Sellersville, Pa., died Jan. 12. Spouse: Hannah Detweiler Gahman (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Maggie Histand Gahman (deceased). Survivors: children Betty Good, Earl; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 16 at Rockhill Mennonite Community Chapel, Sellersville.

Good, Lois Graybill, 85, Sterling, Ill., died Jan. 19. Spouse: (1st) Eldon Shank (deceased); (2nd) Lloyd Good (deceased). Parents: Simon and Lucy Mishler Graybill (deceased). Survivors: children Edith Martin, Duane Shank, Carl Shank, David Shank; stepdaughter Lois Olson; nine grandchildren; six stepgrandchildren; three great-grandchildren; 16 step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 22 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling.

Hartzler, Mary Byler, 94, Dayton, Va., died Jan. 14. Spouse: Benjamin Hartzler (deceased). Parents: John and Fannie Byler (deceased). Survivors: children Eugene, Ernest, Lois Runyon, Martha Rohrer, Maxine Zook, Florence Showalter, Bertha Showalter, Alice Hostetter; 17 grandchildren; 39 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 18 at Slate Hill Mennonite Church, Camp Hill, Pa.

Hochstedler, Nona Helmuth, 93, Greentown, Ind., died Jan. 20. Spouse: Willis Hochstedler (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Magdalena Yoder Helmuth (deceased). Survivors: children Walter, Gene, Helen Yoder; 15 grandchildren; 33 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 24 at Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo, Ind.

Logan, Dale, 66, Kalona, Iowa, died Jan. 28. Spouse: Darlene Miller Logan. Parents: William (deceased) and Edna Hochstetler Logan. Other survivors: children Loren, LaVerne, Kimberly Fankhauser, Karla Doerksen; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 30 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona.

Mascarenas, Margaret Lopez, 86, Denver, died Feb. 5 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Salomon Mascarenas (deceased). Parents: Eusebio and Cecilia Lopez (deceased). Survivors: children Abran Lopez, Theodore, Dennis, Cecilia; 12 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 11 at First Mennonite Church, Denver.

Miller, Willis, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died Feb. 6. Spouse: Ruth Shank Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Merryl, Winfred, Marjorie Presley, Cheryl Heatwole; 14 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 9 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Plank, Doreen Hynes, 64, Arthur, Ill., died Feb. 3 of cancer. Spouse: Ira Plank. Parents: John and Blanche Hynes. Other survivors: children Connie Hendrix, Sheila Hynes; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Arthur Mennonite Church.

Plenert, Edna Ewert, 93, Hillsboro, Kan., died Jan. 3. Spouse: Ben Plenert (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Minnie Ewert (deceased). Survivors: children Orley, Howard, Dwight, Hazel Hein, Verna Treadway; 11 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 6 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Plenert, Sara Epp, 86, McPherson, Kan., died Jan. 17. Spouse: Arnold Plenert (deceased). Parents: G. E. and Cornelia Epp (deceased). Survivors: children Evelyn Ewert, Vernon, Lloyd, Arnette Duerksen, Sarito Duerksen, Paul. Funeral: Jan. 20 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson.

Regier, Eldo, 83, Buhler, Kan., died Dec. 17. Spouse: Evelyn Regier (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Lizzie Regier (deceased). Survivors: children Darrel, Robert; six grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 21 at Buhler Mennonite Church.

Ruby, Benjamin, 84, Tavistock, Ont., died Jan. 9. Spouse: Elmina Wagler Ruby (deceased). Parents: Christian and Magdelina Iutzi Ruby (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Ramseyer, Carl, Royden, Margaret Roth; 12 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 12 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Schattak, Helen Jantz, 85, Hillsboro, Kan., died Jan. 13. Spouse: Arthur Schattak (deceased). Parents: Edward and Wilhelmina Arrant Jantz (deceased). Survivors: children Glenn, Gary, Jeanie Hellman, Janice Bailey; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 17 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Schlosser, Susie Price, 88, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 8 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Jacob Schlosser (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Amanda Price (deceased). Survivors: children James, Jane, Thomas, William, Ferne Lopez, Gail Kleintop, Keith; 12 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 12 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

Siemens, Curt, 95, Buhler, Kan., died Jan. 11. Spouse: Agatha Franz Siemens (deceased). Parents: John and Sarah Franz Siemens (deceased). Survivors: son Gary; four grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 15 at Buhler Mennonite Church.

Swartzendruber, Mary Lois, 65, Kalona, Iowa, died Feb. 4. Parents: Urie and Norma Kinsinger Swartzendruber (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 7.

Valentine, Anna Ruth Steiner, 83, Pandora, Ohio, died Jan. 28. Spouse: Paul Valentine. Parents: Lennis and Hulda Schumacher Steiner (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 1 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Winters, Ida Kennel, 83, Lititz, Pa., died Feb. 6. Spouse: John Winters. Parents: Christian and Elizabeth Fisher Kennel (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Donald, Joyce Wright; foster daughter Martha High; eight grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 10 at Landis Homes, Lititz.

Wyse, Vernon, 82, Wayland, Iowa, died Jan. 16. Spouse: Mary Wenger Wyse. Parents: Elmer and Mary Alliman Wyse (deceased). Other survivors: children Elmer, Kathryn Couch, Shirley Oswald, Linda Stump; nine grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 19 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Yoder, Emma Miller, 87, Arthur, Ill., died Dec. 31. Spouse: Ura Yoder (deceased). Parents: Sam and Mary Schlabach Miller (deceased). Survivor: daughter Ada Wilson. Funeral: Jan. 8 at Arthur Mennonite Church.
lespi, Nita Gerwels, Joe Jr., John;

Zook, Barbara Elizabeth, 93, Kalona, Iowa, died Jan. 31. Parents: Lewis and Clara Stutzman Zook. Funeral: Feb. 3 at East Union Mennonite Church, Kalona.

A Continuing Education Seminar

Natural Church Development

Saturday, June 24, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

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Fill out the coupon below and send it in today to request a free pledge packet, including "100 Ways to Give 100 Bucks," a list of fun ideas to get the whole family in on the giving. In the U.S., you can send your reply to either New Century of Mission, Box 370, Elkhart, IN 46515-0370, (219) 294-7523 or New Century of Mission, Box 347, Newton, KS 67114-0347, (316) 283-5100. In Canada, mail your request to New Century of Mission, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. Or call (204) 888-6781. You can also receive this pledge packet by visiting our Web site at www.mbm.org/ncm.

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classifieds

- **La Junta VS** ***alumni reunion:*** April 7-9, 2000. For details, call Kristy Yordy, 219-294-7523; email Kristy@mbm.org

- **First Mennonite Church**, Berne, Ind., seeks a full-time ***youth pastor***. Address inquiries/resumes by March 15, 2000, to First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-3108; email craig@firstmennonite.org

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks full-time ***Spanish teacher*** to begin as soon as possible. Contact Barbara Moses, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; 215-769-5363.

- **Civil rights history bus tour:** Greensboro, Montgomery, Tuskegee, Birmingham, Selma, Atlanta, Farmville, Washington D.C. ***June 23-July 1***. Contact Franconia Conference Damascus Road Anti-Racism Team, 215-723-5513; email SharonW@MRN.org; www.MRN.org/Droad/bustour.html

- **Ten Thousand Villages** seeks ***store manager*** (full-time). Send resume to Ten Thousand Villages, 701 Gettysburg Pike, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055, attn. Susan Asbury, personnel committee. Call Earl Henry, board chair, 717-697-5021; email henry8@attglobal.net

- **Prince of Peace Mennonite Church**, Anchorage, Alaska, small, family-oriented church founded on Anabaptist teachings, seeks part-time ***pastoral leadership*** July 2000. Inquiries to Rosetta Landis, 907-337-5813; email goldpan@alaska.net

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a ***coordinator of Christian education***, part-time (26 hours/week). Organizational, creative, self-starting, teaching and relational skills desired. Position is immediately available. Contact Ken Bontreger, Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Called to ministry?** Swamp Mennonite Church in rural southeastern Pennsylvania, one hour north of Philadelphia, seeking full-time ***associate pastor of youth ministries***. Utilize your gifts in our Anabaptist community. Send resume to Swamp Mennonite Church, attn. Search Committee, 2125 Rosedale Road, Quakertown, PA 18951; email swamppb@fast.net

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate minister*** with emphasis on youth and young adult ministries. Organizational skills, a heart for youth, some experience in youth ministries, and bachelor's degree desired. Position is available immediately.

  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is looking for teachers of ***English, mathematics, science, technology and library science, languages, physical education, art and music*** who have experience working with minority students in an urban setting.

  For more information, write to Mrs. Barbara Moses, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

- **Albany Mennonite Church**, Albany, Ore., is seeking applicants for a full-time ***lead pastor*** beginning summer 2000. This congregation of approximately 125 is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley, 70 miles south of Portland. Applications accepted through March 31.

  Contact Larry Hauder, Conference Minister, 2028 N. 16th St., Boise, ID 83702; 208-336-5646; email lhauder@compuserve.com

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 345) invites applications for a full-time position in 2000-01 as high school teacher of ***Spanish***. Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure.

  Please forward a resume to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueck@hotmail.com

- **Freeman Academy**, grades 5-12 with enrollment of 60-100 students, seeks ***principal/teacher*** (Bible and/or other). Freeman Academy has a heritage of 100 years in a rural setting of nine Anabaptist churches with special gifts and love of song and theater.

  Address inquiries and application by March 31 to Search Committee, attn. Stan Ortman, 44574 280th St., Marion, SD 57043; fax 605-925-4271.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a candidate for the position of full-time ***youth pastor***. Currently Franconia has over 100 jr. & sr. high youth involved in its exciting and growing program. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth.

  Interested people should send a resume to: Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email info@franconiamennonite.org

- **April 7-9, 2000: *Connecting Families Weekend*** at Antiochian Village, Ligonier, Pa. Theme: "Churches of Law, Churches of Love." Dr. Ralph Blair, psychotherapist and founder of Evangelicals Concerned, keynote speaker. Welcome to families, friends and supporters of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons—intended to be a safe, relaxing weekend to share common concerns regarding homosexuality as it affects our families, friends, churches and ourselves. Information call 215-257-9241.

- **Slate Hill Mennonite Church**, Camp Hill, Pa., seeks a full-time ***lead pastor***. The gift of effective preaching is essential. Experience and seminary training are desirable. Must be committed to Anabaptist understandings of faith. Slate Hill is a medium-sized, suburban, well-established Lancaster Conference congregation close to Harrisburg.

  Inquires/resumes to Rosalie Roland, 337 West Meadow Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055; email wlroland@aol.com; 717-697-8650; fax 717-697-5889.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***soccer coach***. Qualifications: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite Church, soccer coaching experience. Responsibilities: recruiting players, scheduling games, managing budget and coaching practices and games. Season runs August through October. Bachelor's degree required, master's preferred. Position may be configured as full- or part-time, based on talents and qualifications of the successful candidate.

  Contact Art Mullet, athletic director, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8278; email artm@hesston.edu

- **Souderton Mennonite Homes**, a growing Continuing Care Retirement Community, is seeking a part-time ***associate pastor*** to join our full-time pastor. Key responsibilities will include the assessment and ongoing nurture of our residents' spiritual needs. CPE training and experience with older adults preferred.

  Interested individuals should fax resume with salary requirements to 215-723-9876 attn. Lisa Peirce, or mail resumes to Souderton Mennonite Homes, 207 W. Summit St., Souderton, PA 18964.

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  Contact Paula Snyder, 301-949-8674.

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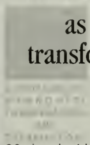
  Holly Grove Christian School is a nondenominational K-12 school affiliated with Holly Grove Mennonite Church and a member of ACSI. HGCS does not discriminate in its hiring practices on the basis of race, color or national/ethnic origin. Please fax a resume to 410-957-4250. For more information, call 410-957-0222 between 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Eastern time.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.



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29 churchwide gatherings are planned throughout the United States, March-June 2000. Join the celebration for the church God is forming among us!

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March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA. Speaker–Diane Zaerr
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson. NB, Speaker–Jim Schrag
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN. Speaker–Jonathan Larson
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN. Speaker–Owen Burkholder
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX. Speaker–Gilberto Flores
March 26, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN. Speaker–Janeen Bertsche Johnson

For more information contact Shelley Buller 316-283-5100 ext. 249
or e-mail ShelleyB@gcmc.org

March 5, First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS
March 12, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, PA
March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, NB
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX
March 26, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN

April 2, Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA
April 2, Norristown New Life Mennonite Church, Norristown, PA
April 2, Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, PA
April 2, Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, DC
April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL
April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FL
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA

May 5-7, First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO (RMMC annual sessions)
May 7, First Mennonite [illegible], Morton, IL
May 7, Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH
May 14, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, OH
May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA
May [illegible], Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA

June 4, Salem Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD
June 8-11, Casselton Mennonite Church, Casselton, [illegible] ([illegible] annual sessions)
June 11, Community Mennonite Fellowship, [illegible], NY
June 22-23, Moses Lake High School, Moses Lake, WA (PNMC annual sessions)
June 24, First Mennonite, Reedley, CA (PNMC [illegible] sessions)

classifieds

- **Hesston College** seeks ***admissions counselor***. Qualifications: good communication and organizational skills, commitment to Mennonite higher education, familiarity with the Mennonite Church. Responsibilities: develop and implement recruitment plan for the western states territory, build relationships with top prospects and applicants, telemarket, travel, represent Hesston College at churches and high schools. Bachelor's degree preferred. Position available early summer.

  Send resume and references to Clark Roth, Director of Admissions, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Deadline April 1. For more information, phone 800-995-2757 or email clarkr@hesston.edu

- **Crown Hill Mennonite Church**, a congregation of 150 members located near Rittman, Ohio, has an immediate opening for a full-time ***lead pastor***. Contact Stuart Newcomer at 330-336-8945.

- **Adults age 50 and over!** Consider an adult service experience at ***Spruce Lake Retreat*** in the Pocono Mts. of northeastern Pennsylvania. Be part of an intergenerational ministry team; enjoy a schedule tailored to your interests and abilities. Work as volunteer or for wages—half- or full-days, a week, month or even year. Explore our 370 wooded acres or surrounding area in spare time.

  Contact Joy Kauffman, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; fax 570-595-0328; email spruce.lake@juno.com

- **Hesston College** seeks innovative individuals with commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite church for the following full-time positions available Aug. 11:

  Art instructor to teach a variety of courses which may include painting, drawing, graphic design, photography, ceramics and art appreciation. Full-time position. Specific assignments will depend on the strengths of the candidate hired. MFA preferred.

  Computer instructor to teach a variety of courses in the fields of web authoring and design, Microsoft business applications, database, networking and programming. Graduate degree preferred. Full-time position. Hesston College will support the candidate in the pursuit of professional certifications (CNE/CNI, MCSE/MCT).

  English instructor to teach college writing, half-time or more. M.A. required, background in rhetoric and composition preferred. One-year assignment.

  Teaching experience required. Contact Marc Yoder, Academic Dean, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8206; marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Southfield Village**, a new continuing care retirement community in South Bend, Ind., seeks an ***executive director*** to develop and manage the 25-acre campus. The organization's 14-member nonprofit board consists of representatives from eight area denominations and has a mission to provide senior services "in the spirit of the reconciling and healing example of Jesus Christ." Construction for Phase 1, including 60 health-care beds and 64 assisted living apartments, is already in progress and scheduled to open in fall 2000. The Master Plan calls for expansion across the continuum beginning with pre-sales of independent garden-style apartments in January 2000.

  Qualified candidates must be a licensed nursing home administrator, have significant senior health-care/housing experience, be able to work effectively with a board of directors, use a collaborative approach to decision making, and bring an entrepreneurial spirit to the work environment. Southfield Village is sponsored by Mennonite Health Services and managed by Greencroft Inc.

  Please send resume to: Kirk Stiffney, Greencroft Inc., P.O. Box 819, Goshen, IN 46527-0819; email Kstiffney@cs.com

- **Goshen College** seeks ***director of family business program***—a full-time position as director of the Family Business Program with some teaching responsibilities. The director plans program activities and relates to firms that are members of the program; edits *Family Business*, a quarterly newsletter, and builds relationships with professional providers to family businesses. Preferred candidates will hold an advanced degree in business, social science or law, and have extensive experience in the following fields: development of courses in a university or family business center, CEO of a challenging entrepreneurial or family business, or experience working with multigenerational family businesses. The position has opportunity for long-term employment. Faculty responsibilities can begin as early as Aug. 15, 2000, or by Aug. 15, 2001 at the latest. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

  Send letter of application, resume and three letters of professional or business reference to Paul A. Keim, Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at www.goshen.edu under "job postings." Review of applications will begin April 15, 2000, and continue until the position is filled.

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by Gordon Houser

Poetry is the natural prayer of the human soul.
—Rainer Maria Rilke

In an interview several years ago with Bill Moyers in a PBS series on American poets, poet Carolyn Forché said: "Reading and writing poetry enables us to sustain and to extend our capacity for contemplation. I think we're living in an age when the velocity of human experience has so accelerated that perhaps our capacity to sustain contemplation is being eroded."

We may differ in our definitions of contemplation, but many of us will agree that the velocity of human experience has accelerated. Replace "contemplation" with "sustained attention." Do you feel you rush from one thing to another? Do you feel inundated by media, whether it's TV, radio, newspapers, magazines or email?

I heard Forché give the keynote address Feb. 18 at the annual literary arts festival of the Milton Center in Wichita, Kan. The center promotes the discussion of literary values and excellence in a Christian milieu. Founded in 1986 by Quaker writer Richard Foster, it is a nondenominational writing and literature education center that seeks to integrate the discussion of Christian thought with literary excellence.

The title of this year's festival was "Beyond This Weight Is a Boundlessness: Identity and the Sacred." Forché told of her experiences as a human rights worker in El Salvador in the late 1970s and how that affected her poetry. She spoke of ethics and language and how language must not be used to control others but to give testimony to human experience.

The other major presenter at the festival was Larry Woiwode, an award-winning novelist and short-story writer. In a discussion of "What is a Christian writer?" he said that the opposite of Christian writing is power. "A Christian writer is a servant of language [and] of character."

Woiwode gave voice to the dilemma that many Christians face who seek to create literary art. He has experienced a kind of shunning from both secular publishers for whom anything remotely Christian is taboo and from "Christian" publishers who want formulaic fiction with simplistic solutions to life. Because the term "Christian writer" is so easily misunderstood, many of those who participate in the Milton Center and beyond might say, "I am a Christian, and I am a writer, but don't call me a Christian writer."

Some may view literary excellence as elitist, yet it is really an engagement with human experience through the written word. It acknowledges that such experience is complex, that it offers no simple answers but many questions. It also requires, beyond an ability to read and think, a sustained attention and an empathy with what people experience in various situations.

With today's media overload and accelerated velocity of experience, an encounter with good literature may seem a luxury. But without such a regular encounter, according to Forché, we may lose the ability to sustain contemplation, may lose that "natural prayer of the human soul."

The three best-selling books in the United States in 1999 were the first three books by British author J.K. Rowling about Harry Potter. The same books were also among the 10 most censured last year by parents of school-age children. Among the latter group were many Christians who don't like the idea of books that talk about wizards (for that's what the fictitious Harry Potter is).

Harry Potter
AND THE
SORCERER'S STONE
J. K. ROWLING

At the same time, many Christians, including evangelicals like Charles Colson, enjoy and defend the Potter series. The evangelical magazine *Christianity Today* even affirmed the books in an editorial in its Jan. 10 issue.

Our family read the first three books (out of a projected seven, the fourth is due in July) in the series, and we loved them. Friends have reported that their children who don't much like reading have spent hours with these books.

The drawing power of the books is that they are well-written, with marvelous, engaging characters, ingenious plots, lively dialogue and laugh-out-loud humor. And contrary to the fears of many, the books affirm goodness over evil. While not explicitly Christian, the stories portray Christian virtues such as compassion, loyalty, courage, friendship, self-sacrifice and even nonviolence.

For anyone who likes a good story, I recommend them highly.—*gh*

books

More books on Celtic Christianity (see *The Mennonite*, Aug. 17, 1999): One of the best introductions to the topic for the general reader is *Discovering Celtic Christianity* by Bruce Reed Pullen (Twenty-Third Publications, 1999, $12.95). Pullen recounts his own journey to Celtic sites and presents helpful historical background, biblical and personal reflection and photos.

Two excellent books by J. Philip Newell are *The Book of Creation: An Introduction to Celtic Spirituality* and *One Foot in Eden: A Celtic View of the Stages of Life* (each Paulist Press, 1999, $8.95).

Celtic Blessings and Prayers: Making All Things Sacred by Brendan O'Malley (Twenty-Third Publications, 1999, $12.95) is a good resource for everyday use or with groups.

Perhaps the most comprehensive book is *Celtic Spirituality*, translated and introduced by Oliver Davies (Paulist Press, 1999, $29.95).

sports

After *National Catholic Reporter* joked in its Jan. 28 edition that the St. Louis Rams had not lost a game since the Pope held a Mass in the Trans World Dome in January 1999, Mennonite Melanie Zuercher wrote in the Feb. 11 edition of the *Reporter*: "The Rams have not lost a game [there] since the Mennonites were there for their major convention in July." Further, she wrote, the next big convention is to be in Nashville, home of the Tennessee Titans, who lost to the Rams in this year's Super Bowl.

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Gordon Houser

Strangulation by triangulation

The tongue is a fire.—James 3:6a

I've done it. You've done it. I've been its victim. So have you, no doubt. Nearly everyone in the church has practiced or been hurt by this sin.

Call it gossip. Call it a critical spirit. I'll call it triangulation. Whatever we call it, we need to identify it, beware its destructive power and—to alter a phrase—just don't do it.

Someone says to you, "So-and-so didn't like what you did." You want to say, "That's good to know, but why didn't they tell me themselves? And why are you telling me?"

A worse scenario is that you never hear it. People don't like something you're doing; they tell others, and soon many are talking about your failures, yet no one talks to you. After a while you pick up some bad vibes from people, but you don't know if it's your imagination or if people just don't like you.

Maybe you're the one who doesn't like something someone is doing. Innocently, you think, you mention it to a friend, someone you think will agree with you. They do, and the entangling vine keeps growing.

If we want to give up something for Lent, perhaps it should be gossip. Let's talk to, not about, others. Let's build up, not strangle, our church.

Or maybe you're one who likes to come to people and tell them what others are saying about them. That doesn't keep the strangling vine from doing its work.

Who is getting strangled? Yes, the person being talked about. But more so it's the community, the congregation or whatever social group you're in that is being hurt. And not just hurt but destroyed.

The Bible has much to say about the power of words. James 3:1-12 talks about taming the tongue. In Matthew 12:36-37, Jesus says people "will have to give an account for every careless word."

Ephesians 4:29 says: "Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear."

"Useful" doesn't only mean that we talk nice. Corrective words are at times necessary for building up a person or the community. But such words need to be addressed directly, not by some roundabout way that may only build distrust.

In a passage the early Anabaptists called the rule of Christ (Matthew 18:15-20), Jesus says, "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone" (verse 15). Notice that the communication is direct and private. Only "if you are not listened to" (verse 16) do you take one or two others with you.

We in the church often fail to practice this simple command. One of the main reasons is that we lack courage to face our own sins. At least, that's been my experience.

I used to live in an intentional community, in close proximity to other members of my congregation. We committed ourselves to practice this rule. Almost every time I went to someone to talk about something they did that bothered me, I learned something about myself that needed correcting. That's never easy. But we all grew in love through this practice, and the community's experience of the Holy Spirit deepened.

It comes down to two virtues we desperately need to practice: honesty and love. People have said that one of the besetting flaws of Mennonites is their niceness. David Augsburger calls this denial. I call it dishonesty. I dislike it when people smile at me while harboring hatred.

Please understand that I'm not advocating that we suddenly go out and criticize everyone we can think of. We're already doing that, just not often to their faces. Instead, let's take a deep breath, go to God in prayer and ask what we need to learn before we say a word to anyone. As my wise mother used to say, "If you can't say something good, don't say anything at all."

Lent begins on March 8. If we want to give up something for Lent, perhaps it should be gossip. Let's talk to, not about, others. Let's build up, not strangle, our church.—*gh*

the Mennonite

March 14, 2000

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conflict resolution

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Twenty and more

J. Lorne Peachey said it well in his Feb. 22 editorial ("Twenty for the 20th Century"): Even with a list of 140 (or more) people, there would still be lots more leaders that should have been mentioned in *The Mennonite*'s list of the most influential Mennonites of the 20th century (Feb. 22).

I really think Lois Kreider, Robert's wife, should have been included for her long history of work with MCC and Ten Thousand Villages. Bill Snyder should have been included with Orie Miller for his dedicated work to MCC. A great pillar in the church, faithful worker for many years, was H.B. Schmidt (1901-1984), a teacher, minister and counselor. During World War II and after, he counseled and obtained placements for many 1-W registrants.

I think the *The Mennonite*'s selection of the 20 most influential Mennonites was well done, and we were greatly enriched by their dedicated service to the Mennonite church.—*Jack Stauffer, Newton, Kan.*

What a suprise to know that I and 4,664 other Mennonite Civilian Public Service men, plus hundreds of women, were included corporately among the Mennonites who made a difference in the 20th century. We were thrust from our tightly knit communities into distant places of service. The work and leadership responsibilities set patterns for our later lives. In camps and units, we experienced the fellowship of the total Mennonite family, its varied branches, localities and names. It may well be that the legacy of CPS most needed as we enter the 21st century is that of unity through service and witness.—*Harold D. Lehman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

The Mennonite's choices of the people who had the greatest influence on us in the 20th century needs some broadening. I would include the pastors who have served our churches during this time. Many of them served in Civilian Public Service, but many did not. Then I would add the missionaries who served both here and abroad. A third group I would add are the teachers in our colleges and seminaries. All of these had an impact on our thinking and changed us in significant ways. You name several teachers and one missionary who became an administrator, but only one selection served his whole life as a pastor, Christian Neff.—*David L. Habegger, Fort Wayne, Ind.*

A full one-third of "The Other 19" selections of the 20 most influential Mennonites of the 20th century profoundly touched and blessed my life between 1955 and 1980. Hardly a day goes by that I do not quote or refer in conversation to one or more of them. It was my great privilege to relate to those heroines and heroes of faith then and to now recognize their exemplary lives.—*Joyce Bratton Yoder, Belleville, Pa.*

Although the three pages of "The Other 19" warmed my heart with the descriptions of outstanding 20th-century Mennonites, I find it a sad indicator of this church's treatment of women. Why do gifted Mennonite women receive far less opportunity—and credit—than their male counterparts? While the faces of Katie Funk Wiebe and Doris Janzen Longacre and others may stand relatively alone in a sea of men, I hope that they may inspire the Mennonite church to bless the gifts that will allow the pages of a 21st century Mennonite retrospective to look far more like the diversity in which God created us.—*Tim Shenk, Goshen, Ind.*

Late in his career, Mennonite publications informed us that John Howard Yoder was under church discipline for misconduct. This was appropriate information. His obituaries also noted his misconduct. But is it really necessary for this information to be stated every time he is now mentioned—even when he is being honored as one of the most influential Mennonites of the 20th century? It is my understanding that Yoder was reconciled to his church before his death. The church discipline is therefore lifted. If we are going to add a caveat every time his name is mentioned, then we ought to add a caveat with each of our names as well.—*Ryan Ahlgrim, Indianapolis*

I have no quarrel with *The Mennonite*'s top 20 influential Mennonites, and I am not suggesting that any should be removed from the list. But what are we to make of the fact that all but one are Americans and Canadians? Without a qualification that eligibility is limited to North Americans, it is another illustration of our ethnocentric tendencies.—*Edgar Stoesz, Akron, Pa.*

Editor's note: The list of most influential Mennonites was of those who have had the greatest impact on the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church—two U.S. and Canadian bodies—in the 20th century.

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y readers say

Generation to generation

Victor Stoltzfus' strong affirmation of grandparenting ("The Gift of Grandparenting," Feb. 15) drew my mind back to the words of President George Bush when he was not re-elected. When asked what he would do now, he quickly replied, "I am going to be spending more time in the grandparenting business."

I can relate to the feeling Stoltzfus describes when a grandchild says, "I love you." Those words are repeated frequently to my wife and me by our 10 grandchildren, from the 23-year-old grandsons down to the 5-year-old granddaughter. Stoltzfus is also right when he stresses the importance of the way we relate to the grandchildren's parents. Their role is new to them at first, and, with our experience, we have much to share. Most importantly, they and we are always conscious that those we have brought into the world have an eternal destiny and that our teaching is key to the decision they will hopefully make in following Christ as Savior and Lord.

Grandparenting is a gift, so let us seek the gift and practice it faithfully.—*Eugene R. Witmer, Smoketown, Pa.*

Canon fodder

Re "Biblical Golf" by Lynn Miller (Speaking Out, Feb. 15): I chuckled through most of the article until I got to the paragraph on the book of Judith. The beginning of the article states that Miller "dug deeply into the Scriptures" for his material. Judith, however, is not Scripture but a book of the Apocrypha. While the Apocrypha includes edifying books, it has never been included in the canon of Scripture. Miller may use whatever sources he chooses, but I hope that in the future he will be more careful to label those sources.—*Rodger K. Schmell, Hatfield, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Conflict resolutio

The five most common conflict management styles

by Marlin E. Thomas

No one likes conflict, yet we all face it daily. Sometimes we deal with it so routinely that we hardly notice it; other times it upsets our entire day.

At a conference a speaker once asked the audience of about 100 how they usually responded to conflict. The most frequent answers were these: ignore it, I can't believe it, let it pass, I'm out of here, get 'em, go for it, what's wrong with 'em, shock.

These answers illustrate the two most frequent approaches to resolving conflict: avoidance and contest. But there are other options also. These include accommodation, compromise and collaboration.

Scripture contains at least 134 conflict stories. These range from short ones, such as the serpent tempting Eve (Genesis 3), to the ongoing strife between David and King Saul (2 Samuel) or Jesus and the Pharisees.

In 111 of these stories, one single conflict resolution style is used by the respondent (see box at left), and in 57 of them the conflict management style utilized brings the respondent a satisfactory outcome. In the other 23 conflict stories, more than one conflict management style is employed, with mixed results.

In this article, the respondent is identified as the one who experienced the conflict, which was initiated by another person. A "satisfactory result" is defined as the respondent being satisfied with the outcome. Further biblical analysis is necessary to determine whether it was also a satisfactory outcome from God's point of view. (See *A Study of Conflict in the Bible* by Marlin Thomas, Resources for Resolving Conflict, 1988.)

Contest is the most frequently employed approach to conflict resolution in Scripture. It is sometimes called "competition" or "forcing." It occurs 65 times in the 111 conflict stories mentioned above. Forty-nine times (75 percent) the respondent does not experience a satisfactory outcome; 16 times (25 percent) he or she is satisfied with the outcome.

Three of the highest-profile cases with a negative outcome are the lifelong rivalries between Jacob and Esau and between David and King Saul, as well as Paul and Barnabas' unsuccessful attempt at putting their team back together for the second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-41). Two of the highest-profile cases with a positive outcome are Moses' patient, assertive engagement of Pharaoh until God's actions finally convince him to let the Israelites leave Egypt, and the apostles' steady commitment to continue speaking about Jesus in spite of the warnings of the Sanhedrin (Acts 4:1-21).

Contest (or forcing or competition) says, "I want to have it my way. I must have it my way." It always culminates in a win-lose situation and usually leads to destruction of relationships and more conflict.

Here's how it works. Someone makes a statement about something or wants something. Another person disagrees. Instead of seeking to understand each other, each argues for one point of view. They may believe God is squarely on their side, and there cannot be any compromise. Or they may simply be convinced they are right, and there are no other options. The argument either weakens their relationship or destroys it. In most cases, a much better way to approach such disagreement is described below.

Collaboration, the second most frequently used biblical approach to conflict resolution, is the one generally utilized in building consensus and strengthening relationships. In the 20 biblical conflict stories in which collaboration is used, the respondent experiences a positive result 17 times (85 percent).

Two significant conflict stories in which collaboration results in a positive outcome are the negotiations between Abraham and Abimelech over the water rights for their flocks (Genesis 21:25-32) and the resolution of the problem concerning the daily distribution of food in Acts 6:1-6. A story in which collaboration did not have a positive outcome is of Balaam, where Balaam wants to "talk it over with God." God agrees with Balaam's request, allowing him to serve the King of Moab if he agrees to speak only what God tells him to speak. Balaam does but later reneges on his agreement, with disastrous consequences (Numbers 22-23,31; Revelation 2:14).

Collaboration says, "Let's talk about the issues and interests we all experience, as we

Marilyn Nolt—for illustration only

Scripture contains at least 134 conflict stories. These range from short ones, such as the serpent tempting Eve (Genesis 3), to the ongoing strife between David and King Saul (2 Samuel).

search for the best solution for us all." It is a genuine win-win situation. It leads to a strengthening of relationships and personal growth in our lives.

Here's how it works. Someone makes a statement about something or wants something. Another person disagrees, but, instead of starting an argument, they offer an alternative or ask a question. The conversation that follows allows both sides to consider more options, alternatives or ideas than either has come up with on their own. It's like weaving a rug. As the shuttle passes back and forth, a beautiful pattern emerges.

Collaboration is hard when people are sure of themselves or believe their view is from God and there can be no other options. However, it is always good to remember that God's ways are always "higher than our ways" (Isaiah 55:9). Sometimes what we think is the full counsel of God is really only partial revelation.

Anabaptists believe God speaks through the entire body of Christ. That means that when two believers are engaged in a conversation and have opposite points of view, God is present in each of them. God does not contradict himself, but neither does he reveal all of his holy will to one person. As we seek to piece together the parts of God's will revealed to each of us, we gain a fuller understanding of God's perfect will.

It's like a family who orders a large pizza but wants different toppings. Some order pepperoni, others sausage, others pineapple, others Canadian bacon. When the pizza arrives, people may want a taste of other pieces. When family members can share their pieces with each other, the family is enriched and strengthened. And sometimes they learn to enjoy a new flavor.

Marilyn Nolt—for illustration only

Accommodation is the third most frequently used approach in the biblical narrative. Utilized in 19 of the biblical conflict stories, the respondent experiences a satisfactory outcome in 17 of the conflicts (89 percent) where it is used.

Perhaps the best-known conflict story in which accommodation results in a positive outcome is when Abraham accommodates his nephew Lot. Their flocks have become too numerous for their grazing lands, and Abraham allows Lot to choose which way he will go (Genesis 13). Even though Lot's history in Sodom is not positive, his relationship with Abraham remains positive.

A sad story of accommodation occurs in Genesis 3, when Adam goes along with Eve and eats the forbidden fruit.

Accommodation says, "I'll go along with you; you can have it your way." This approach may be termed a "lose-win by choice" option. It occurs when a mature individual chooses to go along with another individual for healthy reasons. It may involve a situation where keeping the peace is more important for the relationship than winning, or it may involve a situation where the other will be needlessly offended otherwise. It may be similar to Paul's advice to avoid eating meat offered to idols if it causes another individual to stumble (1 Corinthians 10:31-33).

The other two conflict resolution approaches used in the biblical conflict stories are compromise and avoidance. Compromise is utilized in four of the biblical accounts, always with a positive outcome, and avoidance is utilized in three of the accounts, also always with a positive outcome.

The best-known example of compromise is the one Daniel makes with the king's servant in Daniel 1 over the 10-day trial diet for him and his three friends. The most telling (and positive) account of avoidance is the story of Joseph fleeing from Potiphar's wife in Exodus 39.

Compromise often says, "If you give something up, I'll give something up, too, but (often) no more than I have to." Although this attitude is not always true of the four biblical compromise stories, the way we often use

Anabaptists believe God speaks through the entire body of Christ. That means that when two believers are engaged in a conversation and have opposite points of view, God is present in each of them.

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Conflict resolution
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compromise is as a "forced win-win" situation.

In this context, one or both parties present alternatives that require the other to give up something valuable in order to secure part of what they want. This approach can bring some elements of harmony and even relational growth. But if it is offered with ulterior motives, it can also set the stage for the next round of conflict.

Avoidance, like the fearful turtle, says, "You can have it your way. I don't care. I'll just pull my head into my shell and live my life the best I can." This approach is a lose-win situation that often leads to serious consequences for healthy long-term relationships, although if used correctly it can also help us avoid falling into sin, as in Joseph's case.

Perhaps the main reason avoiding conflict resolution is not a healthy way to deal with conflict is that it does not allow healthy relationships to grow. A second reason is that we simply end up stuffing our feelings in our inner recesses. That eventually chokes our spirit and doesn't allow us to fulfill God's greatest plan for us.

It is always better to claim the strength of God to look the other person squarely in the eye, and say, "I love you, and I want to have a fruitful, healthy relationship with you. But in order to do so we have to work this out."

Most of us are guilty of avoiding conflict for the wrong reasons some of the time. In such cases it is always better to claim the strength of God to look the other person squarely in the eye and say, "I love you, and I want to have a fruitful, healthy relationship with you. But in order to do so we have to work this out." Then return to the steps above for good collaboration and claim God's promise in Matthew 18:20. As we seek the guidance of God's Spirit in prayer, God will help us work through our differences for his glory.

All five conflict management styles mentioned here have their rightful place, but each must be used wisely. Norman Shawchuck, a conflict resolution consultant, says competition and avoidance may each be safely used about 5 percent of the time, accommodation and compromise may each be safely used about 10 percent of the time, while collaboration, although more difficult, should be the Christian approach of choice for most conflict resolution opportunities.

Marlin E. Thomas is pastor at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Milford, Neb. He has also done extensive work in conflict mediation and counseling

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Famil

by Lola M. Williams

Why must you fight against everything I tell you to do?

Why do we have to have so many rules?

I'm going to date him no matter what you say.

You're not my real mother. I don't have to listen to you.

You spend money faster than I can earn it.

I don't care if we do have to share a room. You leave my stuff alone.

I don't want to boss you—but …

I work just as many hours as you do. Why can't you put away your own laundry?

The battles on the home front rage on—with no apparent truce in sight. Even Christian families are not immune to conflicts between spouses, parents and children, siblings, and members of the extended family.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:13, Paul admonishes the church to "live in peace with each other." We need to apply that Scripture as well to family situations where two or more people live together but struggle to live in harmony. There are some workable ways to resolve family conflicts and some principles that apply to all such conflicts.

What every person needs: Every family member needs to be shown respect. Respect is a two-way street. Children and teens need to know that their feelings and opinions will be considered respectfully, even when their parents disagree with their viewpoints.

Every family member needs a chance to express his or her feelings. The old adage "Children should be seen and not heard" is not necessarily true. A family conference can help resolve differences and clear up misunderstandings. Sometimes we think we make ourselves perfectly clear, but others may not hear what we think we are saying. In a family conference we can stop and ask, "What do you mean by that?" We can at least understand one another clearly, even if we don't always agree.

Every family member needs space. Over the years other relatives have lived with our family for various reasons—including my mother and stepfather, a grandchild, a nephew and niece and one of my husband's brothers and his children. Not all these people shared our home at the same time, but each visitor's sojourn put a crimp in our privacy and space. Sometimes they also put a decided dent in our wallets. Even crowded as we were, we tried to give each family member a space he could call

conflicts

his own—sometimes a whole bedroom or at other times the person's own little corner. Everyone in the household needs to have a space where he can put his things—a place where he can get away by himself.

Every family member needs to have a spirit of cooperation. The larger the family, the more cooperation required. If there's only one bathroom and several people must use it, perhaps an enforced time limit for baths will help. Who has to leave first for school or work in the mornings? She should have first dibs on the bathroom. Each person also needs to be responsible to put her dirty clothes in the hamper, hang up her own towels and wash down the shower walls or bathtub.

Cooperation also extends to other areas, such as the use of the telephone, turning down the volume of the radio or stereo or rinsing out one's own dishes and loading them into the dishwasher. When everyone works together for the good of all, no one family member will resent being overloaded with chores.

Every family member needs to learn tolerance for the shortcomings of other family members. One of our three grown sons and his wife are almost always late to family gatherings. No amount of prodding or scolding has produced change, so we learn to work around it. They have other admirable qualities. Why make a fuss over their shortcomings? After all, we each have our own weaknesses, and other family members put up with us. Lateness, forgetfulness or excessive neatness—whatever the faults of our family members, if we can learn to endure their shortcomings, perhaps they will be kind enough to overlook ours.

Every family member needs to learn to disagree agreeably. I have a friend who hates conflict. Whether she is directly involved or not, she often says to the warring factions, "You're both right—and you're both wrong!" She has a good point. Nobody is 100 percent right all the time. Even when we disagree, it helps to cool overheated temperatures when we can agree to disagree agreeably. Be charitable. Allow others the dignity of their own opinions.

Every family member needs to use the terrific trio: "I'm sorry," "Please forgive me" and "I love you." A lot of family conflicts can be dissolved with these wonderful words.

When our sons were in grade school, I argued with them over something. Later I discovered that they were right and I was wrong, so I apologized to them. One of the men in our church overheard me and took me to task. "I never apologize to my children," he said.

"I do," I said. "When I'm wrong, why not admit it? My kids know it anyway, and honesty earns their respect." That man's children and ours have long since grown to adulthood. Our sons are still our friends. His have drifted away and have little contact with their parents. He may have thought he was always right—but apparently his children knew better.

The difference prayer makes: Every family member needs to learn that prayer changes things. I make it a practice to pray for each member of my family by name every day. This includes my husband, our three grown sons, our three daughters-in-law, our seven grandchildren and our grandson-in-law. Rarely is there conflict among us now, but if there is, I pray that God will help each person involved to forgive and resolve the differences. I prayed even more often for help in resolving family differences when our sons were growing up in our home. During the times we took in extended family members, I prayed especially hard. I'd slip off to the bedroom, close the door and ask the Lord for grace to make it through another day. God always came through for me, though not always the way I expected. It's almost impossible to hold ill feelings toward others when I'm praying for them.

Family conflicts have existed since the first family. They will continue to exist until judgment day. But when we learn to practice harmony in essentials, freedom in nonessentials and love in all things, we become masters in the art of resolving family conflicts.

When we learn to practice harmony in essentials, freedom in non-essentials and love in all things, we become masters in the art of resolving family conflicts.

Lola M. Williams lives in Galion, Ohio.

Some congregations contemplating withdrawal as time for membership decision draws closer

It was a prediction heard from organizational consultants as well as from laypeople in the pews: The formation of a new body out of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) will prompt congregations, maybe even entire area conferences, to withdraw. It now appears those predictions may come true in some areas.

As next summer's watershed joint GC-MC convention approaches, the first organizational alternatives are beginning to emerge in preparation for the official creation of Mennonite Church USA. Those movements, although with years of history behind them, have been popping up in the wake of the St. Louis convention's wrangling over church membership last year.

> We don't want to go to Nashville and find out that the church has gone a direction we cannot go and not have an alternative.
>
> *—Roman Miller*

"I think there was a period of time in which we were in denial," says Mennonite Church USA general secretary George Stoltzfus, "and believed that if we just did everything right, this would not happen."

It's happening in several regions in the eastern United States.

- In a special meeting on March 18, Eastern District delegates will vote on a resolution to not join Mennonite Church USA, the latest—and probably last—development for a conference with a history of factionalism.
- Lancaster Conference bishops in January issued a statement indicating that the conference would consider not joining the new denomination if it does not "make its teaching clear" on issues of homosexuality and membership.
- Virginia Conference delegates last month tabled a similar resolution.
- Although they are not setting out to create new structures, other groups have started meeting in the Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences to push for a return to what they see as biblical orthodoxy.

Those movements converged in a Feb. 12 meeting in Smoketown, Pa., where participants approved creating an "alternative affiliation of evangelical Anabaptist congregations." The motion passed by a 42-0 vote with five abstentions.

Present at the invitation-only meeting were pastors and other leaders from Allegheny, Atlantic Coast, Eastern District, Indiana-Michigan, Lancaster, Ohio and Virginia conferences. All except Eastern District are MC area conferences.

A steering committee is now being formed to develop the project under the auspices of the Evangelical Anabaptist Fellowship, an inter-Mennonite organization based in Harrisonburg, Va.

While meeting participants overwhelmingly set the wheels in motion for a new fellowship, they have not necessarily committed themselves to it. That includes the person who made the motion. "My motion had to do with … a need for that organization," says Ernie Mummau, pastor of Lancaster member Nickel Mines Mennonite Church, Quarryville, Pa., "although Nickel Mines probably would not fit [in the new organization]."

Many who voted for the new group say they are waiting to see what happens with the membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA, which are expected to come before GC and MC delegates at their convention in Nashville next summer. At St. Louis last year, delegates voted to delay taking action on the guidelines, which proposed that all current GC and MC congregations—including those GC congregations disciplined by MC area conferences because of their positions on homosexuality—automatically become members of the new denomination. The matter now rests with the Constituency Leaders Council, which will draft a proposal for the 2001 convention.

"We don't want to go to Nashville and find out that the church has gone a direction we cannot go and not have an alternative," says Roman Miller, a Virginia overseer.

Mario Bustos, pastor of Valparaiso (Ind.) Church, said he voted for the motion at Smoketown even though he is a member of a new network of congregations working for reform within Indiana-Michigan. "I would be supportive of the [Smoketown] entity," he says.

Likewise, Richard Woodcock, pastor of Eastern District's Indian Valley Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa., says he wanted to offer "encouragement" for an alternative structure. But he is not sure that there is enough theological commonality for all the Smoketown participants to come together in one fellowship.

"Everyone wants to see the cards on the table first," Woodcock says. "There are real questions about where people are coming from."

While a wait-and-see attitude permeates the results of the Smoketown meeting, the outcome of the March 18 Eastern District meeting is considered more certain. "Regardless of how the vote goes, there will be some number of churches that will leave," says Lee Delp, a member of Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa., and of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board.

If the resolution to not join the new denomination is approved, those who wish to be part of Mennonite Church USA are expected to pull out of the conference. If the motion fails, then those opposed to Mennonite Church USA membership will probably withdraw.

"I wish that weren't the case, but I fear it will be," Woodcock says.

That would leave one group or the other looking for other affiliations. "Some of us want to hang together," Woodcock says of the conference's anti-Mennonite Church USA congregations. Those favoring the new denomination would probably turn to Atlantic Coast or Franconia, the two MC area conferences in proximity. "We would probably seek membership in one of those," says Joe Kotva, pastor of First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pa.

One Eastern District congregation, West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., already has associate membership in Franconia.

But the conference's divisions are not only between congregations but also within them. The meeting's action could very well split congregations which are already divided, Delp says. "That may be as much a tragedy as our inability to stay together as a district," he says.

The resolution is being brought by East Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, and endorsed by individuals from 10 other congregations. Still to be determined is whether passage of the resolution will require a two-thirds or simple majority vote. The meeting will be at Christopher Dock High School, Lansdale.

The 26-congregation Eastern District has long been marked by fissures, going back at least to the modernist-fundamentalist controversies of the early 20th century. More recently there have been disagreements over ordination of women and the 1995 confession of faith as well as homosexuality.

At Virginia's midyear delegate session on Feb. 5, a motion from the floor urged the conference to not become part of the new denomination if it "does not adopt guidelines consistent" with church statements. The motion was tabled until the conference's July assembly.

"A Statement of Faith and Call to Prayer" from the Lancaster bishops makes a similar plea. "We do not wish to choose between unity and holiness in forging a new identity," the January document reads.

But some Lancaster congregations' desire to separate are also driven by the conference's decision last fall to grant credentials for women in ministerial positions except for lead pastor and bishop. "Our allegiance is more to an evangelical gospel," says Doug Graybill, pastor of Canton (Pa.) Mennonite Church and an initiator of the Smoketown meeting. "There's not this Mennonite do-or-die mentality."

He says a "significant" number of Lancaster congregations will opt out of the new denomination but doesn't know how many. "That's what we're trying to find out," Graybill says.

For congregations looking for new affiliations, two potential options mentioned have been the Conservative Mennonite Conference and the Evangelical Mennonite Church. Officials from both bodies say they have fielded membership inquiries from current GC and/or MC congregations, although none has of yet joined. A handful of congregations have already withdrawn over issues related to the impending merger.—*Rich Preheim*

AIMM

Raising the roof in Congo

Congolese and North American members of an Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission work team lift a truss for Sanga Mamba Church in Kinsasha, Congo. The Mennonite congregation's church building had been without a roof for 16 years. The 14-member AIMM team helped complete the roof during an eight-day visit in January.

Hesston repeatedly gives peace a chance

Working for peace can be a marathon endeavor. So can preaching peace.

Hesston (Kan.) College hosted a Feb. 25 "preach off" as part of a weekend peace festival. From 9 a.m. through 4 p.m. (with time out for lunch), a speaker took the pulpit at Hesston Mennonite Church every half hour to deliver a peace sermon. The 11 speakers included pastors from Kansas and Nebraska, Hesston College faculty members and students in the school's pastoral ministry program.

Activities on Feb. 26 were devoted to telling peace stories for children, youth and adults.

The featured speaker for the weekend was storyteller and author Peter J. Dyck, who emphasized that peacemaking must begin with a personal commitment to follow Jesus.

"Peace with God is first," he said. "Then you must have a support group. You can't do it alone."

Creating new church also personal transformation, speaker says to start series of U.S. gatherings

NEWTON, Kan.—The process of creating a new church out of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) used to be called integration. Now it is being called transformation.

There's a reason for the new terminology, says Duane Beck, pastor at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

"Transformation is about surrender, and transformation invites us to trust God," Beck said March 5 as the preacher at the first of 29 gatherings planned nationwide through June in support of the emerging Mennonite Church USA.

Other than a report on the transformation process, the evening event, held at First Mennonite Church in Newton, was a time of worship and praise. The text for the series of gatherings is Revelation 21:5, where God declares, "I am making everything new."

Beck acknowledged trepidation at such prospects. "You mean all things new?" he said. "You mean it's not just the thing I wanted to see changed? … I would like for the GCs to become new, but I'm not sure about us MCs."

The GC-MC merger has been in process for more than a decade, resulting in timelines, reports, studies, organizational plans, consultations and meetings galore. But the creation of a new church—and a renewed commitment to faithfulness—requires something more foundational, Beck said: "That faith in God is central and all other things peripheral."

The evening also featured an offering for expenses related to the process of creating Mennonite Church USA. A committee made up of GC and MC agency representatives has started a drive to raise $800,000. The fund-raising committee and the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board have already contributed or pledged more than $10,000.

Faith in God is central and all other things peripheral.

—Duane Beck

Rich Preheim

Judy Schrag changes an overhead display during a presentation by her husband, Jim, director of the Transformation Team, responsible for overseeing the development of Mennonite Church USA. The presentation, given March 5 in Newton, Kan., was part of the first of 29 congregational gatherings to be held nationwide in support of the transformation process.

Nearly 300 people attended the evening session. In the afternoon, about 120 people attended a meeting on the transformation process for congregational leaders. Project director Jim Schrag reported on findings from last fall's "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" congregational study and reviewed organizational strategies for the new denomination. Responses from the Newton meeting and the other 28 gatherings, to be held in areas of Mennonite concentration from coast to coast, will help further refine the transformation process.

Schrag also encouraged GC congregations to select their delegates this spring for next summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn. MC area conferences generally appoint their denominational delegates well enough in advance of their assemblies, allowing them to prepare for the issues. GC congregations should do likewise as delegate input becomes more important in the development of the church, Schrag said.

"GC congregations will have to say this is an important thing," he said.

But Schrag underscored that the reason for these meetings is more than just sharing information. "We gather in people's home settings," he said, "to hear the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ in praise and worship."
—Rich Preheim

Denominational membership remains stable

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—Membership in the new Mennonite Church stands at 163,837 in 1,407 U.S. and Canadian congregations, according to the *Mennonite Directory 2000,* released earlier this month. Membership is down slightly from last year's 163,950.

Mennonite Church Canada has 35,877 members in 255 congregations, while Mennonite Church USA has 123,404 members in 1,140 congregations. Eighty-seven emerging congregations in both countries reported no members. The largest congregation, First in Winnipeg, has 1,280.

Mozambique flood responses under way

MCC and MEDA exploring options to assist victims

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has given $22,000 to aid flood victims in Mozambique and plans to do more. High water from heavy rains and a cyclone have left 1 million Mozambicans homeless in the last month.

Some $2,000 of MCC money has gone to 21 families who lost their homes in the village of Marracuene, where MCC worker Cheryl Delaplane lives.

"Have you ever seen anyone carry all their belongings in a bucket?" Delaplane, from Ames, Okla., wrote in a Feb. 10 email. "I was walking with Maria Alice, my colleague, surveying the damage. We met her cousin coming up from the river. She was wearing a ripped T-shirt, skirt and was barefoot, carrying a bucket with two empty coke bottles, a plastic water jug and two unmatched shoes. That is all she owns now. She told us her whole house was washed away."

In addition to the destruction of property and roads, drinking water and food are scarce, and what is available is too expensive for poor Mozambicans.

MCC has also given $20,000 to the Christian Council of Mozambique's relief efforts. MCC workers James Kornelsen and Michelle Janzen from Winnipeg have been distributing relief aid with Christian Council of Mozambique staff.

Ideas for further MCC assistance include providing food, supplies such as clothing and tarps, and providing seeds and tools. An MCC assessment team is expected to arrive in Mozambique later this month to explore aid options.

Ed Epp, director of Mennonite Economic Development Associates' international operations was also scheduled to go to Mozambique to investigate possible MEDA response efforts.

MEDA's program is concentrated in Maputo, the capital city, where 300 market vendors obtain credit from MEDA for inventory and business improvements. Initial reports suggest that as many as 30 percent of MEDA's clients have been affected by the flooding.

The excessive rain has also left parts of neighboring South Africa underwater. MCC is providing aid to 13 families in Link, a village south of Durban.—*MCC News Service with MEDA News Service*

Award honors North American work

ELKHART, Ind.—Church leaders on the denominational and local levels have been recognized by Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) for their work in the North American mission field.

Ed Bontrager, a principal architect behind the Living in Faithful Evangelism (LIFE) program, and Monroe and Rachel Yoder, a longtime Mennonite presence in New York City, are this year's recipients of MBM's Lark Awards for mission efforts in North America. The award is named for James Lark, the first African-American bishop in the Mennonite Church, and his wife, Rowena, who were active in urban ministries in a number of U.S. cities.

Bontrager, now pastor of Huntington Mennonite Church in Newport News, Va., helped develop the LIFE project in 1987. It is now a joint effort of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Brethren Church and Church of the Brethren.

He received the Lark Award Feb. 5 at Virginia Conference's winter delegate session. "He is a man of good insight," said Joe Bontrager, U.S. regional director of Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions. "His leadership in the LIFE process has shown that."

The Yoders moved to New York in 1965, expecting they would stay long enough for Monroe to get his master's degree in biology. But they ended up staying beyond that as they accepted increased responsibilities in Seventh Avenue Mennonite Church. Monroe served as associate pastor through the 1970s. In 1979, Lancaster Conference ordained him bishop, the city's first resident Mennonite bishop.

Since helping form the New York City Council of Mennonite Churches in 1980, the Yoders have been active in organizing its annual convention. Monroe retired from New York University in 1998 to devote more time to the work of the city's congregations.

"[Monroe] has been instrumental in shaping the vision of New York City in a very significant way," says Michael Banks, pastor of King of Glory Tabernacle, a Mennonite congregation in the Bronx.

The Yoders will receive the award March 19 at the Lancaster annual meeting.—*Mike Knaack of MBM News Service*

Cincinnati hosts fifth arts weekend

The fifth biennial Mennonite Arts Weekend, held Feb. 4-6 in Cincinnati, celebrated music, painting, sculpture, fabric, writing, theater and other forms of expressions.

About 210 people registered for the event, which was organized by Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship.

Composer J. Harold Moyer of North Newton, Kan., was the featured artist, honored for his contributions to religious and secular music. He composed "God of the Earth, the Sky, the Sea" specifically for this year's Mennonite Arts Weekend. The piece was performed by the Bluffton (Ohio) College Camerata Singers.

Esther Augsburger of Harrisonburg, Va., was the weekend's featured sculptor. Among her displays was an 18-inch bronze piece that will be cast as a nine-foot statue for the Russian city of Syktyvkar as a monument to victims of the gulags.

by the way ...

First Mennonite Church of Halstead, Kan., in 1875 became the first congregation in the "new west" to join the General Conference Mennonite Church.—*Western District Conference News*

Conference: Don't ignore cultural diversity

ELKHART, Ind.—Anabaptists wanting to plant churches in the 21st century will be successful only if they increase awareness of the multicultural, diversifying population in North America, some 40 practitioners and scholars heard at a recent conference.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, hosted the third annual Anabaptist Evangelism Council Feb. 19-20. The council was sponsored by New Life Ministries, a partnership of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Church of the Brethren and Brethren Church, plus two Anabaptist-related parachurch organizations.

Steve Reid, professor at Austin (Texas) Presbyterian Seminary and pastor at Austin Mennonite Church, compared Anabaptists' multicultural efforts to the Jonah story.

"We hear the call to take the word of the Lord to another culture, but resisting, we instead book a ship to Spain, the opposite direction," Reid said. "And even when given a second chance, like a three-day retreat in the belly of the whale, we finally go but complain. ... Like Jonah, too, we often have poor attitudes about the people [of another culture] and are surprised, even angry, when they show a repentant attitude, like Nineveh."—*GCMC News Service*

MCC seeks solution to Bangladesh water problem

DHAKA, Bangladesh—Until the mid-1970s, many rural Bangladeshis drank water from ponds, rivers and streams. As a result, cholera and diarrhea killed thousands. So Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and other agencies developed water supply and sanitation programs.

But many of the wells sunk as part of that work have been discovered to have dangerous levels of naturally occurring arsenic, threatening millions of Bangladeshis.

So MCC has established the Arsenic Remediation Project to search for a solution. MCC encourages people to treat a bucketful of water with aluminum sulfate—traditionally used to remove soil particles from water—and let it stand for two hours to allow the arsenic to settle. The top two-thirds of the water is then filtered through sand to remove most of the remaining arsenic. The water, however, still has significant amounts of aluminum. Although the amount of aluminum is within acceptable levels, it is a factor requiring more research.—*MCC News Service*

Mission campaign receives first major gift

ELKHART, Ind.—A Harrisonburg, Va., couple has made the first major gift to a campaign to strengthen mission efforts in the new Mennonite Church.

Lewis and Ethel Strite have made a $25,000 donation to the New Century of Mission campaign, a joint project of Mennonite Church, General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church Canada mission agencies. Lewis Strite is a former Mennonite Board of Missions board member.

"Mission begins when individuals have a clear understanding of their purpose, what they're here for," Lewis says. "Our world is crying for examples of what it means to be a believer."

The campaign seeks to create sources of funding for new and existing mission work.
—*MBM News Service*

Principal receives Bethel young alumni award

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College 1983 graduate Leticia Palacioz Nielsen received the school's 2000 Young Alumni Award in a March 6 ceremony at Bethel's North Newton campus.

Nielsen has been principal of Bishop Carroll Catholic High School in Wichita since 1996. Prior to that she was assistant principal for two years. Nielsen majored in business education and in economics and business administration at Bethel and has a master's degree in education administration and supervision from Emporia (Kan.) State University.

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Support these and other MCC programs that enable women and their families to have enough food and calories. Call your nearest MCC office for a list of agriculture projects geared to women.

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Central
Committee

Mennonite Central Committee
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Mennonite Central Committee Canada
134 Plaza Drive, Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9; (204) 261-6381 or (888) 622-6337

www.mcc.org

Workers

Diaz, Juan, was licensed Feb. 12 as pastor of the Hispanic ministry at Mount Jackson (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Graybill, Beth, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Akron, Pa., as director of MCC U.S. Women's Concerns.

Koontz, Esther and Nathan, North Newton, Kan., are beginning three-year assignments with MCC in Egypt as English teachers.

Kusuma, Rina, Stanton, Calif., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Los Angeles as a church community worker.

Mackey, Blanca, Kenner, La., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Metairie, La., as a church community worker.

Mitchell, Miriam and Ron, Philadelphia, are beginning three-year assignments with MCC in Zambia, she as a clinical nurse tutor and he as a community development worker.

Raber, Mary, St. Louis, is beginning a four-year assignment with MCC in the former Soviet Union as an assistant to the country representatives.

Reed, Stanley, Bourbon, Ill., is beginning a three-year assignment with MCC in Bolivia as an appropriate technologist.

Stoll, Alvin, was ordained Jan. 9 as pastor of South Lawrence Mennonite Church, Glen Flora, Wis.

Stoltzfus, Louise, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as editor of MCC U.S. Women's Concerns.

Births

Cordell, Shannon Renee, Feb. 22, to Michael and Tammy (Scott) Cordell, Marion, Pa.

Hooley, Ryan Daniel, Feb. 19, to Daniel and Jennifer (Brown) Hooley, Hartville, Ohio.

Martin, Taylor Christian, Feb. 18, to Christina (Stoltzfus) and Earl Martin, Honey Brook, Pa.

Otto, Leah Kathleen, Feb. 17, to Joel and Lisa (Rheinheimer) Otto, Orrville, Ohio.

Raber, Max Halden, Feb. 13, to Jill (Pallo) and Steven Raber, Evergreen, Colo.

Sharp, Luke Robert, Feb. 5, received for adoption Feb. 6, by Duane and Stephanie Sharp, Shipshewana, Ind.

Tarantino, Anthony Lee, Feb. 21, to Janeen (McKennon) and Terry Tarantino, East Greenville, Pa.

Wyse, Aubrey Lyn, Feb. 19, to Donna Chamberlain and Lynn Wyse, West Unity, Ohio.

Zuercher, Emma Rose, Feb. 13, to Lisa (Sommerfeld) and Steve Zuercher, Orrville, Ohio.

Marriages

Freeburne/Peck: Jennifer Freeburne, Pocatello, Idaho, and Damon Peck, Pocatello, Feb. 19 at American Falls, Idaho.

Harper/Troyer: Christa Harper, Hartville, Ohio, and Lance Troyer, Millersburg, Ohio, Feb. 5 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Janzen/Yoder: Jeanine Janzen, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ont., and Gregory Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va., Dec. 29 at Grantham Mennonite Brethren Church, St. Catharines, Ont.

Mengel/Miller: Kimberly Mengel, Wooster, Ohio, and Jason Miller, Millersburg, Ohio, Feb. 12 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Moan/Starner: Caleb Moan, Toledo, Ohio, and Erin Starner, Millersburg, Ohio, Jan. 22 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Alderfer, Margaret Landes, 67, Harleysville, Pa., died Feb. 21. Spouse: Durrell Alderfer. Parents: Cyrus (deceased) and Sallie Anders Landes. Other survivors: children Doreen Bender, Daniel, Timothy; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 26 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Bender, Charles, 38, Barto, Pa., died Feb. 21. Parents: Norman and Alice Arnold Bender. Funeral: Feb. 25 at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.

Bookwalter, Helen Epp, 94, Beatrice, Neb., died Feb. 4. Spouse: Benjamin Bookwalter (deceased). Parents: John and Anna Reimer Epp (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 8 at Beatrice Mennonite Church.

Ediger, Gustave, 92, North Newton, Kan., died Feb. 14. Spouse: Wilhelmine Friesen Ediger (deceased). Parents: J.B. and Agatha Regier Ediger (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 17 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Gaeddert, Edna Regier, 92, North Newton, Kan., died Feb. 23. Spouse: Albert Gaeddert. Parents: Abraham and Helen Cornelsen Regier (deceased). Other survivors: children Dale, Kathryn, Carol Burkhart; six grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 28 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Geissinger, Isaac, 76, Quakertown, Pa., died Feb. 10 from complications of a blood disorder. Spouse: Edna Geissinger. Parents: Clarence and Maggie Clemmer Geissinger (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Larry, Ray, Earl, Jay, Carl, Shirley, Linda Seidel, Arlene Yothers; 26 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 15 at Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown.

Gore, Hollis William, 86, Larned, Kan., died Jan. 24 of Parkinson's disease. Spouse: Sadie Schultz Gore. Parents: Chester and Hazel Gore (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Mary Ellen Root; one grandchild. Funeral: Jan. 28 at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan.

Herr, Elizabeth Hostetler, 99, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 17. Spouse: Amos Herr (deceased). Parents: Jeptha and Fannie Hostetler (deceased). Survivors: children June Hofstetter, Ed; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 21 at Goshen. Memorial service: Feb. 21 at Orrville, Ohio.

Jantzi, Louise, 94, New Hamburg, Ont., died Feb. 5. Spouse: David Jantzi (deceased). Parents: Andrew and Lydia Groff (deceased). Survivors: stepdaughter Shirley Martin; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 8 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Janz, Philbena Jantz, 95, Inola, Okla., died Dec. 30. Spouse: Simon Peter Janz (deceased). Parents: John and Elizabeth Jantz (deceased). Survivors: children Joseph, Winnona Jantzen, Vera Jackson, Loritha Boone; 17 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 4 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola.

King, Naomi Hartzler, 84, West Liberty, Ohio, died Feb. 15 of cancer. Spouse: Floyd King (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Amanda Detwiler Hartzler (deceased). Survivors: children Rosalee Readout, Sharyn Yoder, Ron, Vera Buehler, Sheryl Wyse, Brenda Tennant; 20 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 18 at West Liberty.

Kreider, Miriam Pauline Mishler, 81, Harlan, Ind., died Feb. 11. Spouse: Ford Kreider (deceased). Parents: Oscar and Emma Miller Mishler (deceased); stepmother Carrie Stahl Mishler (deceased). Survivors: children Philip, Fred, Romona Beyeler; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 14 at North Leo (Ind.) Mennonite Church.

Lepley, Mabel Knepp, 86, Belleville, Pa., died Feb. 20 of cancer. Spouse: Homer Lepley (deceased). Parents: William and Mary Alice Snook Knepp (deceased). Survivors: children Alice, James, Robert, Lester; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Reedsville, Pa.

Linsenmeyer, Henry, 86, Beatrice, Neb., died Feb. 18. Spouse: Alma Wiebe Linsenmeyer (deceased). Parents: Carl and Lydia Linsenmeyer (deceased). Survivors: children Dale, Janice Blosser, Dean, Michael Meagher; 10 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 21 at Beatrice Mennonite Church.

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Lohrenz, Elizabeth Claassen, 86, Newton, Kan., died Feb. 9. Spouse: Cornelius Lohrenz. Parents: Henry and Helene Penner Claassen (deceased). Other survivors: children Ruth, Paul, Thomas; eight grandchildren. Memorial service: Feb. 13 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Mast, Amy Joyce Taylor, 72, Honey Brook, Pa., died Feb. 16. Spouse: Melvin Mast (deceased). Parents: Edgar and Verna Taylor (deceased). Survivors: children Harold, Harlan, Herbert, Susan Dick; 10 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 21 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Neel, Lucille, 86, Chouteau, Okla., died Dec. 10. Survivors: children Gene Kelsey, Larry Neel; six grandchildren. Funeral: Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla.

Noll, Janet Burkholder, 68, Newmanstown, Pa., died Feb. 8. Spouse: Leon Noll. Parents: Aldus (deceased) and Martha Denlinger Burkholder. Funeral: Feb. 14 at St. Paul United Church of Christ, Schaefferstown, Pa.

Peachey, Raymond, 90, Belleville, Pa., died Feb. 15. Spouse: Ethel Malinda Zook Peachey (deceased). Parents: Solomon and Katherine Spicher Peachey (deceased). Survivors: children Joyce Yoder, Ronald, Timothy, Darlis Myer, Wilbur, Conrad, Dennis, Kenneth; 25 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 20 at Allensville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Reschly, Ervin, 93, Wayland, Iowa, died Feb. 5. Spouse: Esther Roth Reschly (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Barbara Nebel Reschly (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Cross, David, Lester, Ann Martin, Christian, Mark; 12 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 8 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Sauder, Amos, 87, Ephrata, Pa., died Feb. 15 of cancer. Spouse: Barbara Eshleman Sauder. Parents: Amos and Anna Hoover Sauder (deceased). Other survivors: children Daniel, David, Marian, Marvin, Anna Mary, Evelyn; 17 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Metzler Mennonite Church, Ephrata.

Snyder, Wayne, 77, Waterloo, Ont., died Feb. 22. Spouse: Lovina Ziegler Snyder (deceased). Parents: David and Barbara Gingrich Snyder (deceased). Survivors: children Don, Marilyn, Richard, June White; four grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 25 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Weaver, Homer, 51, Willow Street, Pa., died Feb. 15. Parents: Paul and Della Kurtz Weaver (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 17 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Wilker, Jean Headings, 65, Milverton, Ont., died Jan. 25 of cancer. Spouse: Elroy Wilker. Parents: Archie and Mary Headings (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen Good, Neil, Norma, Karla; two grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 28 at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, Ont.

Yoder, Joe, 89, Shipshewana, Ind., died Feb. 10. Spouse: Pearl Bowen Yoder. Parents: Sol and Susie Chupp Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Hazel Ann Bontrager, Rosalie Bontrager, Marilynn Hooley, Peggy Gillespi, Nita Gerwels, Joe Jr., John; 32 grandchildren; 49 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: Feb. 14 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

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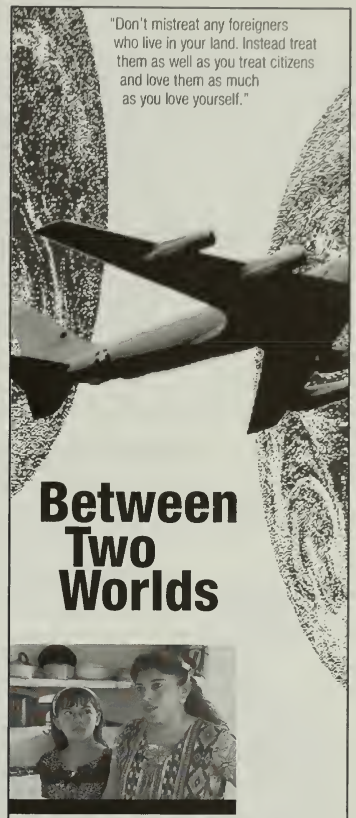

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classifieds

- **La Casa de Maria y Marta** seeks applicants for ***director***. This San Antonio Mennonite Church ministry provides opportunities for groups to serve in the city while learning about realities in San Antonio and South Texas. Responsibilities include developing and directing service and learning programs for youth and adults and coordinating cross-cultural seminars for college students. Full-time, salaried position, housing provided. Spanish helpful but not required.

  For information and an application, contact John Lichty, 210-533-7181; emilyjohn@juno.com or lacasa602@aol.com

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- **Prince of Peace Mennonite Church**, Anchorage, Alaska, small, family-oriented church founded on Anabaptist teachings, seeks part-time ***pastoral leadership*** July 2000. Inquiries to Rosetta Landis, 907-337-5813; email goldpan@alaska.net

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 345) invites applications for a full-time position in 2000-01 as high school teacher of ***Spanish***. Applicants should hold, or be qualified to obtain, Indiana licensure.

  Please forward a resume to Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueckak@hotmail.com

- **Albany Mennonite Church**, Albany, Ore., is seeking applicants for a full-time ***lead pastor*** beginning summer 2000. This congregation of approximately 125 is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley, 70 miles south of Portland. Applications accepted through March 31.

  Contact Larry Hauder, Conference Minister, 2028 N. 16th St., Boise, ID 83702; 208-336-5646; email lhauder@compuserve.com

- **Spend a couple of weeks in Guatemala! *Volunteers*** are needed to finish the construction of Semilla, the Latin American Anabaptist Seminary in Guatemala City. The seminary provides biblical and theological education for 10 Anabaptist-Mennonite conferences in Central America and Mexico. Especially needed right now are people with skills in carpentry, dry walling, painting and electrical. Curt and Gloria Nussbaum from Kidron, Ohio, are at the site helping with leadership in the completion phase of the project.

  If you can volunteer sometime between now and June, please contact Steve Steiner at 330-857-7665 or email sbsteiner@aol.com

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- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is looking for teachers of ***English, mathematics, science, technology and library science, languages, physical education, art and music*** who have experience working with minority students in an urban setting.

For more information, write to Mrs. Barbara Moses, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a candidate for the position of full-time ***youth pastor***. Currently Franconia has over 100 jr. & sr. high youth involved in its exciting and growing program. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth.

Interested people should send a resume to: Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email info@franconiamennonite.org

- **Slate Hill Mennonite Church**, Camp Hill, Pa., seeks a full-time ***lead pastor***. The gift of effective preaching is essential. Experience and seminary training are desirable. Must be committed to Anabaptist understandings of faith. Slate Hill is a medium-sized, suburban, well-established Lancaster Conference congregation close to Harrisburg.

Inquires/resumes to Rosalie Roland, 337 West Meadow Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055; email wlroland@aol.com; 717-697-8650; fax 717-697-5889.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a multiracial, inner-city elementary school, has teaching positions available. We are in search of a classroom teacher for ***5th/6th grade*** and an ***art/music*** teacher. These are full-time voluntary service positions. Housing, health insurance and stipend provided. Ten-month contract begins Aug. 14, 2000.

For more information or to request applications materials, contact Marv Friesen, Principal, CMLC, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Herald Press** seeks applicants for ***trade publishing book editor***. Plans, acquires and develops book manuscripts in assigned subject areas to carry out an international Anabaptist-Mennonite book publishing program, releasing 20 to 25 titles a year. Begins summer of 2000.

Send inquiry or application with resume to Awanda Pritts, Human Resources, Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683; email Apritts@mph.org

- **Jubilee Association**, a Mennonite-affiliated organization that serves adults with developmental disabilities in metropolitan Washington D.C., is seeking a ***director of human resources***. Responsibilities include recruitment of employees, staff development and training as well as participating in the agency management team. Bachelor's degree with 2 years supervisory experience in the field of developmental disabilities required. Experience in human resource management desirable.

Contact Paula Snyder, 301-949-8674.

- **Hesston College** seeks ***soccer coach***. Qualifications: innovative spirit, love for students, commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite Church, soccer coaching experience. Responsibilities: recruiting players, scheduling games, managing budget and coaching practices and games. Season runs August through October. Bachelor's degree required, master's preferred. Position may be configured as full- or part-time, based on talents and qualifications of the successful candidate.

Contact Art Mullet, Athletic Director, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8278; email artm@hesston.edu

- **Southfield Village**, a new continuing care retirement community in South Bend, Ind., seeks an ***executive director*** to develop and manage the 25-acre campus. The organization's 14-member nonprofit board consists of representatives from eight area denominations and has a mission to provide senior services "in the spirit of the reconciling and healing example of Jesus Christ." Construction for Phase 1, including 60 health-care beds and 64 assisted living apartments, is already in progress and scheduled to open in fall 2000. The Master Plan calls for expansion across the continuum beginning with pre-sales of independent garden-style apartments in January 2000.

Qualified candidates must be a licensed nursing home administrator, have significant senior health-care/housing experience, be able to work effectively with a board of directors, use a collaborative approach to decision making, and bring an entrepreneurial spirit to the work environment. Southfield Village is sponsored by Mennonite Health Services and managed by Greencroft Inc.

Please send resume to: Kirk Stiffney, Greencroft Inc., P.O. Box 819, Goshen, IN 46527-0819; email Kstiffney@cs.com

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- **Hesston College** seeks ***admissions counselor***. Qualifications: good communication and organizational skills, commitment to Mennonite higher education, familiarity with the Mennonite Church. Responsibilities: develop and implement recruitment plan for the western states territory, build relationships with top prospects and applicants, telemarket, travel, represent Hesston College at churches and high schools. Bachelor's degree preferred. Position available early summer.

Send resume and references to Clark Roth, Director of Admissions, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Deadline April 1. For more information, phone 800-995-2757 or email clarkr@hesston.edu

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classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **The Arkansas Valley Resource Center**, an agency committed to helping victims of violence in La Junta, Colo. is looking for someone who would be willing to ***work in our shelter/safe house***. Job responsibilities include working with clients to maintain their safety, promoting well-being, and regular maintenance chores to keep the shelter in good functioning order. Qualified applicants will display a commitment to helping and supporting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The ability to maintain a nonanxious presence in crisis situations is important. Benefits include a place to live with utilities included, and salary.

  Interested people should direct their inquiries and resumes to Merritt Welty, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 502 Harriet Ave., La Junta, CO 81050. For more information call 719-384-9673 or 719-384-5189.

- **Goshen College** has an opening for ***director of career services and orientation*** June 1, 2000. This 10-month position provides leadership in student orientation, employment, career counseling and job placement activities. Assists with retention issues, selection of major fields of study and graduate school counseling. Teaches several career selection classes. Provides supervision of administrative assistant and director of applied learning. Reports to the vice president for student life. Master's degree required, Ph.D. preferred along with work experience in a related field. Demonstrated ability to complete work in a timely, professional way, organize many tasks simultaneously, maintain excellent personal and team relationships, provide effective supervision. Needs self-management and commitment to professional improvement.

  Letter of application, resume and three letters of reference will be accepted in the Human Resources office, Administration Building room 13, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526 through March 17, or until the position is filled. The personnel information form at www.goshen.edu/employment/personl.html also must be completed. Call David Janzen at 219-535-7507 or email davidpj@goshen.edu for more information. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

- **Hesston College** seeks innovative individuals with commitment to Mennonite higher education and the Mennonite church for the following full-time positions available Aug. 11:

  Art instructor to teach a variety of courses which may include painting, drawing, graphic design, photography, ceramics and art appreciation. Full-time position. Specific assignments will depend on the strengths of the candidate hired. MFA preferred.

  Computer instructor to teach a variety of courses in the fields of web authoring and design, Microsoft business applications, database, networking and programming. Graduate degree preferred. Full-time position. Hesston College will support the candidate in the pursuit of professional certifications (CNE/CNI, MCSE/MCT).

  English instructor to teach college writing, half-time or more. M.A. required, background in rhetoric and composition preferred. One-year assignment.

  Teaching experience required. Contact Marc Yoder, Academic Dean, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-327-8206; marcusy@hesston.edu

- **Choice Books Central Office** seeks ***accountant-information systems administrator***. Responsibilities: manage central office accounting system; train/support CB Distributor accounting staff; develop/support local area networks; financial budgeting/planning. Qualifications: accounting/computer systems experience; technical, organizational skills; database management experience. Education: accounting/computer information degree.

  Please submit resume to John Bomberger, Choice Books, 2387 Grace Chapel Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801; fax 540-434-9894; email bombergerj@choicebooks.org

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by Rich Preheim

More proof of Christianity's subversiveness

The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service is apparently a little nervous when it comes to the topic of incarceration. Lead a Bible study for INS detainees about visiting prisoners, and you get the rug pulled out from under you, says *National Catholic Reporter.*

That's what happened at the Elizabeth (N.J.) Detention Center, where about 300 people from Africa, Albania, Sri Lanka and elsewhere who are seeking asylum are held in a windowless former warehouse. Asylum seekers can wait for months or years before they get the proper documentation and are released.

For six months, a Jesuit volunteer group had been leading a weekly prayer meeting and discussion with detainees, using the Catholics' scheduled gospel reading for the following Sunday. Everything was going well until shortly before Thanksgiving 1999, when the Scripture passage was Matthew 25:31-46—"I was in prison and you visited me." That ended not only the Bible discussions but also the Jesuits' other programs at the center, including visitation and English-language instruction.

The Jesuit group "broke the covenant that had been reached with the INS," says local INS director Andrea Quarantillo. "It was understood by all parties that detention issues would not be topics for discussion."

But Will Coley, who directed the Jesuits' programs at the center, says, "I'm not really sure what brought on this [INS] paranoia."

Lowering the bar

In order to tap into a broader base for support, the Canadian arm of Gideons International has canned its requirement that members abstain from intoxicating beverages.

President Elmer Bartel says the decision should not be seen as a tacit endorsement of alcohol consumption. "Our spiritual standard is still very specific and strong," he tells *ChristianWeek.* "Our application form highlights living as Christ would have us live. We've tried to get away from the legalistic side of it. It's not our role to police the Christian lifestyle."

The change removes an obstacle for men "who are committed Christians but who cannot at present participate with us in the ministry," Bartel says. He also says the change makes Canada's guidelines consistent with those in other countries. Gideons International operates in 173 countries, but the Canadian organization was the only one stipulating that its members be teetotalers.

Bedfellows, strange or otherwise

The presidential campaign has provided plenty of religious thrills and chills: George W. Bush's ill-advised venture to Bob Jones University. John McCain's blasts of Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson. Now comes Bill Bradley and Jim Wallis.

Investor's Business Daily suggests that Wallis, editor of *Sojourners* magazine and founder of the Call to Renewal anti-poverty and anti-racism initiative, is a driving force behind the agenda of the former New Jersey senator. "The themes in Bradley's playbook sound strikingly [similar] to those trumpeted by" Call to Renewal and *Sojourners,* the financial publication writes.

Wallis says he and Bradley have "dialogued" several times and that the candidate has been interested in Call to Renewal since it was formed in 1995. Bradley has addressed Call to Renewal summits in Denver and Washington.

Bradley's campaign staff downplay Wallis' role and influence. "I'm not sure I'd describe him" as an adviser, says deputy press secretary Tony Wyche.

Number crunching

Whatever happens to used surveys? They go to the American Religion Data Archive (ARDA). Started by Purdue University researchers in 1996, the databank (found on the web at www.thearda.com) contains nearly 150 surveys on church and religion, some of them dating back to the 1950s.

Initiatives in Religion says ARDA's goal is to preserve data on American religion. Surveys found on the website include anti-Semitism, religious education, giving patterns, membership and young adults. In addition to general religious and Christian surveys, denominational studies include Catholic, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Presbyterian and, yes, Mennonite.

The Christian century?

Time for one more retrospective of the past 100 years, courtesy of *Spirituality and Health,* which highlights "milestones in multireligious America." Among them: 1906 in San Francisco—the first Hindu temple established; 1912, Stockton, Calif.—the first Sikh temple established; 1929, New York—the first North American Zoroastrian association formed; 1934, Cedar Rapids, Iowa—first Muslim mosque established; 1944, Topaz, Utah—Buddhist Churches of America incorporated; 1953, Wilmette, Ill.—first Baha'i house of worship dedicated.

Tidbits

- Four out of 10 adults in the United States listen to some Christian radio programming during a typical week.—*Wireless Age*
- There are about 70 Quaker nursery, elementary and secondary schools in the United States.—*Quaker Life*
- The Baptist General Association of Virginia recently rejected the 1998 Southern Baptist Convention statement calling for wives to "submit graciously" to their husbands.—*Christianity Today*
- Ten percent of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America members say they daily read the Bible on their own. Twenty-three percent say they never do.—*The Lutheran*
- The median size of Church of the Nazarene congregations in Europe is 32 members.—*Holiness Today*

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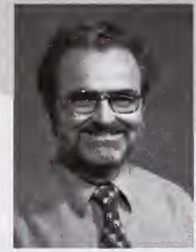


J. Lorne Peachey

I do and we will

I didn't witness Rick Rockwell's wedding. Not because I wasn't invited. Anyone with a TV set could watch this supposed multimillionaire choose a bride from 50 bikini-clad candidates and marry her on the spot.

The vows lasted about as long as it took to write that sentence. Rockwell and his bride came home separately from their honeymoon—and told everyone that is how they spent their first days of marriage. It's over. Score one for voyeurism, none for commitment.

We shouldn't be surprised. Promises are what you make these days to get what you want, out of a jam or someone off your back. Or, in the case of Fox's *Who Wants to Marry a Multimillionaire?*, promises bring cash and cars to the participants and attention to the network during television's all-important ratings week. Promises aren't made to be kept.

Perhaps it's always been so. Instead of watching Fox's two hour matchmaking marathon, I read John Updike's *Gertrude and Claudius.* In this novel, Updike imagines the events that lead up to Shakespeare's famous tragedy *Hamlet.* The king is murdered by his brother, who does the deed to seize the throne and cover up adultery with the queen. Apparently promises meant no more in Elizabethan England than they do in modern America.

> The Bible pictures keeping promises as part of the nature of God, like love and purity. And we who name God's name are to be as zealous about keeping the promises we make.

Or in the Bible. I can't read far in Scripture without encountering covenants and promises. They are made by both God and humans. God keeps his—all of them (Joshua 21:45). Humans, on the other hand, almost always break theirs, and the biblical story is one of God coming back to restore the broken relationships that result over and over.

The Bible pictures keeping promises as part of the nature of God, like love and purity. It uses words like "eternal" or "everlasting" with God's promises, as in the divine covenant with Noah after the flood (Genesis 9:16) and with Abraham when he left his homeland (Genesis 17:7).

We who name God's name are to be as zealous about keeping the promises we make. "If you … keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure," God says in Exodus 19:5. "If you break my covenant, … you will suffer from sudden terrors" (Leviticus 26:15-16).

In this day when commitments seem to count for so little, we who are God's children must remind ourselves of the promises we have made: in our marriages, our families, our friendships, our vocations, our business dealings, our communities.

And in the church. Especially in the church. The forces that make breaking promises so easy in our society are also at work in the church, finding ways to bring faction and disharmony into the body of Christ.

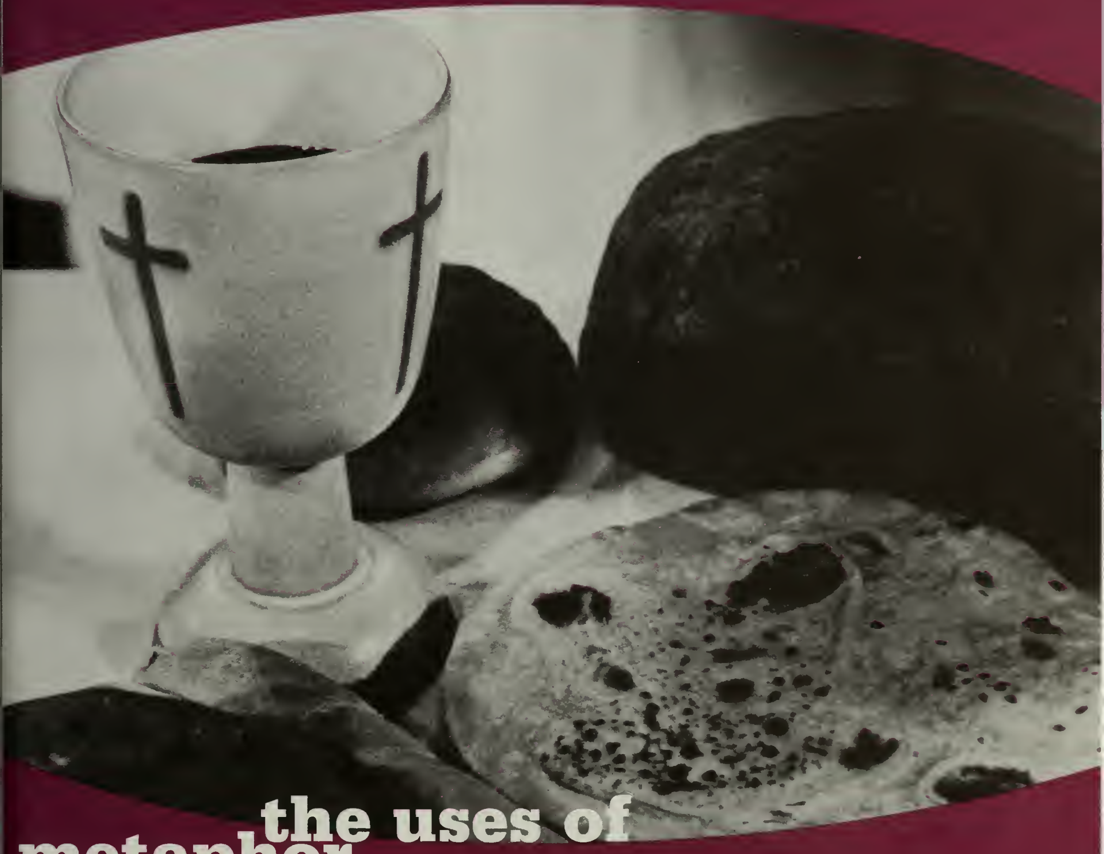
How easy it is these days for individuals to slip out of one congregation and into another when something goes wrong in the first, forgetting baptismal vows to support the body of Christ in its local expression. Congregations can do the same; again this week I heard of another debating whether to leave an area conference because of disagreements on polity and practice. Even some conferences are questioning whether they can remain part of a new denomination that may decide about membership and structures different from what these conferences believe to be faithful. And sisters and brothers in other countries are reminding North American Mennonites of our commitment to support and strengthen the international church as we work so hard for unity on this continent.

This is not to say that the relationships we have today must stand forever. There will be times when old promises need to be superseded by new ones. But we must carefully discern just when that should be. Meanwhile, we must take seriously the promises we have made to each other to work together to preach the good news of the kingdom and to build communities of grace, joy and peace.

Otherwise, we run the risk of experiencing the terror of a God who abhors broken promises. Or, in the eyes of the world, we could become just one more example of people willing to make and break their word for little more than cash, cars and two hours of television entertainment.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

March 21, 2000



the uses of metaphor

for Communion and God

8 God is father . . . and mother

10 First wheelchair-bound MVSer rolls on

19 Resolutions for a new century

20 Little questions from the "Peanuts" gallery

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Clouds and witnesses

Although I appreciated the "20 for the 20th Century" list of influential Mennonites, I must admit that there were some parts that I questioned. Why pick 20 instead of 40? I find myself wondering why one individual made the select group while another received only honorable mention. I think that all 37 mentioned should have had equal recognition.

The Civilian Public Service experience may well have been the one entity that was the most influential in the past century, but I believe it was more than the worker. Those of us who were drafted certainly were a large part of the undertaking, but the entire church shared in the challenging experience. Probably the many Mennonite Central Committee workers and the entire MCC venture should have also been mentioned.—*Victor R. Goering, North Newton, Kan.*

I was glad to see that Myron Augsburger and J.C. Wenger received honorable mention for "20 for the 20th Century" list. I would have preferred that they be numbered among the 20. Their writings have clearly articulated the essence of the Anabaptist faith. They have been especially helpful to people like myself who came to Anabaptism from other faith traditions.—*Lindsey Robinson, Harrisburg, Pa.*

Upon receiving the Feb. 22 issue with the CPS workers on the cover, something in my gut said there is something wrong with this photo. It is too perfect. The lighting on the faces is such that it looks like it was taken in a professional studio using Hollywood stand-ins. And the clouds billowing perfectly overhead can't be real. I looked at the photo credit and found that it was digitally made using a false sky.

In the age of digital information, the line between reality and virtual reality is blurring, and people are having a hard time knowing the difference. As a faith publication, you have the duty to tell the truth in what you write and in the images you portray. You owe it to readers to print the actual photo of the CPS workers and let people know what you did to the photo. Taking artistic license with photographs blurs the line between reality and art. What is next? It is technically possible to remove the cross at Easter.—*Ray Epp, Yubarigun, Japan*

Editor's note: As was credited, the only altering of the cover photo was replacing the original sky with a cloudy sky taken from a stock photo.

To the letter

For some time I skipped past the Readers Say pages. I had found myself often feeling judgmental, angry, agitated or hopeless after reading them. I wished these pages were buried deep within the magazine. Each week I had a sense of God calling me to read each opinion, but I did not have the strength.

When I began to read these pages again, I came with a renewed hope and found these definitions from Richard Olson's book *Midlife Journeys* to be fitting: "(1) Complexity is the awareness of a multitude of factors to consider, with the acknowledgment that we probably never get all the factors in their proper relation to each other. (2) Ambiguity is the awareness that there are aspects of an issue that cannot be known, perhaps not now, perhaps never. (3) Paradox includes the acknowledgment that truth might be held in two seemingly opposite statements, which are held in tension with each other as the deeper truth is sought."

These all speak of humility. They affirm the truth that only God is all-knowing.

I believe Readers Say is vital to my personal growth and the growth of the church. It belongs at the front of the magazine. Although it will at times be difficult, I will read it because it tests, challenges and affirms my faith. I will read it because this is an important part of being community. Only with God's grace will I be able to read every word with humility, hope and love.—*Mary Sutter, Indianapolis*

Keeping the faith

I recently read Jim Compton-Schmidt's letter in the Feb. 22 issue. The letter said: "When a Mennonite mental health facility closes and it creates not even a ripple in the waters of our faith community, one must ask, 'Where are our priorities?' Kings View psychiatric hospital in Reedley, Calif., closed in the early 1990s." I am happy to report that Kings View is not only open but has grown and prospered since 1990. Kings View remains an active member of Mennonite Health Services and is active with other Mennonite constituencies. Kings View retains strong ties with other Mennonite-sponsored organizations, including Mennonite Central Committee, which now utilizes one of Kings View's sites for fruit drying, storage and other volunteer services. In addition, Kings View works very closely with Mennonite Brethren-affiliated Fresno (Calif.) Pacific University in developing community outreach and business education programs.

theMennonite

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y readers say

Our mission is to provide community mental health and social services to those with limited ability to help themselves and to do so in the spirit of Christ's example of love, compassion and respect for all people. The organization carries out this faith commitment on a daily basis in 20 locations with nearly 800 employees. Kings View is the largest Mennonite-sponsored health-care organization in the United States. We provide a variety of services to the community, including mental health, chemical dependency, drug treatment and prevention, a residential program for adolescents, and services for the developmentally disabled. In addition to our core services, Kings View is a partner in Valley Behavioral Health Network, which operates two inpatient psychiatric hospitals in Fresno. It is interesting to note that in a time of budget reductions for mental health and psychiatric services, Kings View has experienced program growth of more than 20 percent per year over the last six years.

In summary, Kings View remains committed to its Mennonite core values and to maintaining and expanding services to those most in need.—*Michael Waters, chief executive officer, Kings View Mental Health System, Reedley, Calif.*

On par

What a breath of fresh air to read "Biblical Golf" by Lynn Miller (Speaking Out, Feb. 15). Sometimes I find that we Christians take our job a bit too seriously and forget that Jesus came so that we may have life and have it more abundantly. I think part of the abundant life includes laughter. I wonder if Jesus would rather us quibble about questions he's already given us the answers to or embrace each other with warm smiles and happy hearts.—*Dawn Mast, Reading, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Religious News Service

Nothing positive

Though I have pastored a congregation for 32 years, I may still have not read the Bible from cover to cover as often as many readers of *The Mennonite.* However, I have never read anything about homosexuality that is positive. It is always spoken of negatively. There are no references that suggest it is approved if done in a caring, loving, monogamous relationship. Nor is any distinction made between so-called predatory and nonpredatory practices.

When a practicing homosexual is denied membership in the church, he may not cry discrimination. Nor may the church be accused of tolerating some sins but outlawing this one. All sins in the church must be dealt with. Some can be corrected by a mere rebuke; others by a process of restoration; still others, which are of a defiant and obdurate nature, by dismissal. This is not punishment. Rather, its intention is to restore the offender to fellowship by causing him shame that his reprehensible behavior resulted in broken fellowship.

I pray that those charged with the responsibility of guiding the church in these turbulent times may speak out clearly and boldly so that the body of Christ may not suffer yet another fracture.—*Marlin Burkholder, Harleysville, Pa.*

Litmus test failings

The use of a litmus test in determining church membership eligibility has struck me particularly forcibly as I have been reading Albert Keim's excellent biography of Harold S. Bender. One can't read the early chapters of this book without being pained by the many times that gifted people were rejected or effectively silenced by the Mennonite Church because of questions of orthodoxy as interpreted by the conservative power brokers. Some of the tests of orthodoxy at that time had to do with approaches to biblical interpretation, but wearing a hat (for a woman) or a lapel coat (for a man) could eliminate you from leadership consideration within the Mennonite Church.

I grew up a generation after Harold Bender, in the same congregation. Within my lifetime, tests of membership have included owning life insurance, union membership, hair styles, wearing wedding rings, the prayer covering, divorce and remarriage, and women in leadership roles. I mourn all the people we lost to other denominations—or to any church community at all—as we enforced these litmus tests. Today, our "revised" biblical interpretations would make room within our fellowship for most of these people, my brothers and sisters lost to us in previous years.

Episcopal presiding bishop Frank T. Griswold II was quoted in 1997 as observing that "the truth is larger than any one perspective." A long-time pastor and friend said at the conclusion of one of his sermons: "When doctrines and relationships come into conflict, I choose to go with relationships. Doctrines will sort themselves out in time." To me, these expressions seem perceptive and worthy of consideration. The thought of excluding more people from the Mennonite Church because of today's litmus tests is extremely painful to me. —*Harold Weaver, Elkhart, Ind.*

Disintegration distress

My heart is heavy because it seems that our quest for unity has resulted in just the opposite. The closing moments of the St. Louis delegate assembly were disappointing. I am distressed that some congregations have such little interest in the process while other congregations are polarized. Pursuit of integration seems to have caused disintegration.

Are we at the point where we should put the current effort on hold? Could a new approach be brought to the next delegate assembly that would introduce a two-year program of teaching on unity and conflict resolution? The new vision on unity would include not only the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church but the total Anabaptist family as well as other groups whose cooperation may enhance kingdom interest in mission. —*David N. Thomas, Lititz, Pa.*

Follow the Spirit

After Jesus left them, the followers of Jesus were anxious, fearful, bewildered and unsure of how to continue with the work of God. Jesus knew this and told them not to worry because the Spirit of God would direct their activities (John 14:17,26). As I read the New Testament, it seems very clear that the first century followers did as they had been instructed, letting the Spirit of God lead them in faith and life. Recall that these followers did not have the writings of the Old Testament.

Have we put the New and Old Testaments above the leading of the Spirit of God? God worked in the first century. Is God's Spirit at work in our world today? Of course God is here and working. We only need to take heed. Let us not worship the Bible; only God is worthy of that honor. I believe only the Spirit of God—not the Bible—can lead us in all matters of God's will. The Bible shares with us how the followers of God understood the work and leading of God in their day and can only suggest, not dictate, the way for us.—*Abe M. Wiebe, Goshen, Ind.*

Lenten reflections

Include all in the celebration of life

by Renton Amell

When it was evening, he took his place with the twelve; and while they were eating, he said, "Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me." And they became greatly distressed and began to say to him one after another, "Surely not I, Lord?" He answered, "The one who has dipped his hand into the bowl with me will betray me."
—Matthew 26:20-23

How odd to sit and eat with someone you will soon betray. How sad to completely reject a dining companion. Yet perhaps not so odd when we consider whom Jesus represented at that last supper. His ministry had been clear; he represented the poor, the widow, the lame, the tax collector—those whom the powerful had rejected. To eat with Jesus was to eat with them.

Just after Thanksgiving, the Native Friendship Center in Kenora, Ont., held its fall feast. This is the equivalent of a Thanksgiving dinner, a time to enjoy the bounty of the earth and to give thanks to God who created it. The Friendship Center's feast is open to the community, and since several of my friends work there, I decided to go.

God expects us to include everyone in the celebration of life. As we partake of the goodness of God's creation, do we insure that all can partake with us?

The event attracted an interesting mix of people. When I got there, a number of elders in wheelchairs had already arrived from the local nursing home. I took a seat. Soon, across the table, the director of the hospital's detoxification program took a seat. Across from her sat the director of the Native addiction treatment center. I recognized the two men who sat across from me as "street people." To my left sat three young women I did not recognize.

Prior to the meal, workers from the Friendship Center circulated with baskets of cigarettes. Tobacco is traditionally used as a symbol of thanks, and they distributed these cigarettes so that people who had forgotten or had been unable to bring tobacco from home could make the offering. The street guy across from me helped himself to about six cigarettes. When the basket came around later he took another half dozen. I suspected these were not all going to be used in the symbolic giving of thanks, but no one raised any objection.

We all stood as an elder gave thanks for the blessings of food and another year under our belts. In the middle of the prayer the young woman to my left laughed, then jabbered something incomprehensible. The prayer continued. After a brief silence she again laughed, this time for a longer period. I realized she suffered from some form of mental handicap. But no one moved to escort her from the room or to silence her.

Then we ate—chicken, moose, potatoes and wild rice. Cheerful chatter filled the air. Young and old, educated and uneducated, physically able and less able, mentally stable and mentally infirm, those with homes and homeless—we all enjoyed the goodness of God's creation.

"He said also to the one who had invited him, 'When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous'" (Luke 14:12-14).

God expects us to include everyone in the celebration of life. As we partake of the goodness of God's creation, do we insure that all can partake with us? Would we sit with Jesus at the last supper, comfortable with whom he represents? Or do we, as surely as Judas, betray Jesus by excluding the least powerful from our celebrations?

Renton Amell serves with Mennonite Central Committee as a community development worker in Kenora, Ont. He is a member of Knox United Church in Kenora.

Really eating and drinking

How understanding metaphor can enrich our experience of Communion

by Michael A. King

Jesus invites us when our very life seems to be at risk, our very selves threatened by whatever starvation we're suffering, to draw strength from the body of one willing to die that we might eat of him.

Communion can gain fresh power for Mennonites if we will grasp the difference between simile and metaphor—and the fact that Communion involves metaphors.

A simile says one thing is like something else. This church is like a city sitting on a hill, shining forth its light. That person is shaped like a pear, starting out smallish at the top then rounding out. "The kingdom of God is like" this or that, Jesus often said.

A metaphor says one thing is another thing. "War is hell," it's sometimes said, not "War is like hell," which would be a simile. "That man is a wolf," someone might say of one who preys on other people.

According to my graduate studies in rhetoric, one "interactionist" theory of metaphor is this: In taking two things and saying that one thing is the other thing, a metaphor even more powerfully than a simile places the meanings of the two things in living interaction with each other. The result is a third set of meanings that come from the intercourse of the first two.

Think again about the word man. We all have images of what a man is. Then think about the word wolf. We all have pictures of wolves. When we say a man is a wolf, it's hard to say exactly what each of us will see, but it will probably be a mannish wolf or wolfish man, a new third thing made up of the mixing of pictures we have of man and wolf. Or try, "She's a fox." Suddenly different pictures are in play.

Similes: What does this have to do with Communion? Let's look carefully at what Matthew 26:26-29 (NRSV) quotes Jesus as saying. Does he say, "This bread and wine is like my body and blood"? He could have said so. Then he'd have been using a simile. Mennonites have tended to treat Jesus' Communion sayings as if they were similes. We've been rightly worried that if we're not careful we'll mistakenly affirm that the bread and wine actually and literally are Jesus' body and blood.

Take a look at the statement on the Lord's Supper in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, which summarizes current Mennonite doctrinal understandings. I support this statement. Yet does the wording maybe imply that Mennonites think Jesus says the bread and cup are like his body and blood? In simile-like style, the confession speaks of the bread and blood as signs pointing toward Jesus, not as elements that are part of Jesus.

But does Jesus speak of the Lord's Supper using similes? It seems clear that Jesus uses metaphors. He picks up the bread and says, "Take, eat, this is my body." Then when he gives the cup he invites, "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

This is that. Metaphor. This bread is Jesus' body. This wine is Jesus' blood. Metaphor. Why does this matter? Not because I want to argue that the bread or wine literally are Jesus' body and blood. I don't believe that. I don't think that's what Jesus, Matthew or other New Testament authors want us to believe. But I suspect Jesus deliberately uses metaphors here to invite us to bring together whatever meanings we associate with bread and body as well as wine and blood. The results can be spine tingling.

We will all associate these four words with different pictures, so the metaphors will come alive for each of us in different ways. But let me give examples.

Wine and blood: Wine can spark pictures of drunkenness, wildness or health, as in "a little wine for the stomach." Or it can stir images—as maybe was true at the Lord's Supper—of marking a special event or offering hospitality.

Blood can be sick if disease disturbs the balance or functioning of red or white cells. It can be healthy, filled with the cells that keep us energized and able to battle disease. Blood can pour out of us. It can be poured into us from someone else when we lose too much. Blood is crucial. We speak of our life's blood. Blood is a life-or-death thing.

Jesus puts wine and blood together in a metaphor. He says this wine is his blood. This symbol of a special event or of hospitality, with hints of wildness or even of danger if you take too much, is joined with the blood we must have to live. Something big is happening, then, to our spiritual bodies when we drink the cup.

RNS

We are at a special event, with a touch of wildness, drinking in the life-giving energy, the spiritual red and white cells, of the one who poured his life's blood out for many, to save each one.

Bread and body: Bread speaks of food, nurture, being filled. "Give us this day our daily bread," says the Lord's Prayer, here using bread as a picture for every food we must take into our body to stay alive.

Body is our physical being, our flesh, everything about us we can touch and have touched. Body is that through which we see and hear and taste and smell—and are seen and heard and tasted and smelled.

Jesus puts bread and body together as a metaphor. He says this bread is his body.

There is a story of bread and body joined that's almost too chilling to speak of yet seems too powerful to avoid mentioning. *Alive*, the book (by Piers Paul Read, 1974) and movie (directed by Frank Marshall, 1993), tells the true story of a soccer team whose plane crashes in the high Andes mountains. Week after week goes by, in the bitter cold, with no rescue. Food is gone. From starvation one by one the survivors die.

Then the remaining ones have to choose: either die as well or treat their dead friends' bodies as bread. They choose, even as the Christians most of them are, to live. The film version of the story closes with the haunting strains of "Ave Maria" rising over the mountains from which, at last, as a result of this awful choice, they escape.

We don't literally eat Jesus' body. That's not what Jesus means. Yet Jesus invites us in a spiritual sense to take in the bread as if it were his body. He invites us when our very life seems to be at risk, our very selves threatened by whatever starvation we're suffering, to draw strength from the body of one willing to die that we might eat of him.

Remember, when a metaphor says this is that, it doesn't mean this is exactly and literally that. That man is a wolf, but he isn't actually a wolf. The sky is the ballroom in which the stars dance, but it isn't truly a ballroom. The wine is Jesus' blood and the bread is Jesus' body, but not really. Except that to say that the one is the other is still a powerful thing. Next Communion let's really eat and drink in that power.

Michael A. King is pastor at Spring Mount (Pa.) Mennonite Church. He has a doctorate in rhetoric and communication from Temple University.

MENNOS AT WORK

Editors' note: *As Mennonites, we believe that "in all areas of life, we are called to be Jesus' disciples" (Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, Article 17). This feature will run approximately once per month. We invite others to answer the questions on this form. Send your responses and a photo of yourself to Gordon Houser,* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Peter P. Preheim, Marion, S.D.

Congregation: Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Occupation: veterinarian

Years in occupation: 34

Why I do what I do: During my boyhood, I was sure I was going to be a farmer. But after high school it became obvious the arrangement did not have long-term potential. I went to college, intending to study engineering, but it was not meant to be. But since animals had always been my major farming interest, I chose veterinary medicine as a career goal. After two years at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., and two years of 1-W service, I enrolled at Kansas State University. My mother's former employer taught at the KSU veterinary school, and he became my mentor. Later I was able to purchase the veterinary practice in my hometown.

The role of faith in what I do: Each of us is called to be a steward of God's creation. As a veterinarian with food animals and companion animals as patients, I carry out that calling in the way I treat these animals—with respect and understanding, empathy and concern for their welfare, to relieve and possibly prevent their suffering. While animals are my patients, their owners and caretakers are my clients. As a Christian I owe these people quality service at a fair price, honest and ethical treatment of the animals in their care and in the advice and medications I dispense. Since my contact with clients is for professional reasons, I avoid preaching, but there are subtle ways of expressing my faith. No foul language, no use of alcohol or tobacco, mentioning such things as church attendance, involvement with the local Mennonite Central Committee relief sale, loyalty to a church-affiliated college and Christian positions on social issues may open the door to more in-depth discussions.

God is fathe

by Howard Zehr

[God] from on high will bring the rising sun to visit us, to give light to those who live in darkness and the shadow of death.—Luke 1:78b-79a, New Jerusalem Bible

This passage from the song of Zechariah was once part of my morning prayers. As a photographer, I basked in the image of dawning light. But I did not expect to see an actual sun or a bright light, and neither did Zechariah's listeners. This is the language of metaphor: the coming Christ is being likened to a sun, his salvation to a revealing, reassuring, guiding light.

The Bible is full of such vivid word pictures for God. God is described as light, king, father, mother, fortress, shepherd, eagle, mountain.

Metaphors are not only helpful but unavoidable whenever we talk about things we cannot see or touch. In fact, metaphors form the structure of our thoughts and discussions. In *Metaphors We Live By*, linguist George Lakoff and philosopher Mark Johnson analyze the ways we depend upon metaphor.

When we talk about God, we must use multiple metaphors. Just one will not do it. That's why the Bible uses so many: shepherd, king, eagle, man and woman.

Metaphors compare: With metaphor we make a comparison but don't say we are doing it. We use metaphor—and other forms of comparison—to explain something we can't see or touch by comparing it to something we know more directly. Most of the time, though, the comparisons are subtle and unconscious. Most of the time we don't realize we are using metaphors.

Science makes constant use of metaphors. The literature on radio refers to radio waves, a model or metaphor. Engineers talk of metal fatigue, a metaphor drawn from human experience. Energy at radio frequencies does not actually move in waves, however, and metal does not literally get fatigued. These are metaphors.

In the emotional realm we use metaphors of spatial relationships to talk about feelings: I'm feeling up today; yesterday I was depressed or down in the dumps. I say I am filled with emotion, using the language of a container and a liquid to describe my sense of self. This use of metaphor seems natural and inevitable because it is so common.

Metaphors highlight and hide: Metaphors are helpful and inevitable. However, the match is never perfect. Metaphor highlights but also hides aspects of reality. Metaphors point us in certain directions but lead us away from others. Often that is helpful, but if not corrected, it is also misleading, incomplete. This is especially true when the metaphors become so commonplace that they are taken as fact.

As a historian I have been fascinated with how we talk about historical change. Predominant in the modern era is the metaphor of growth. Trends develop or evolve out of each other, for example, assuming an organic process that uses plants as a model. When we use the growth metaphor, we assume that change is gradual and has a certain logic.

These assumptions highlight certain characteristics of historical change but hide others. Historical developments are not always inevitable, logical or gradual. When we employ the growth metaphor we obscure important dimensions of historical reality.

Similarly, when we talk about time, Lakoff and Johnson remind us, we have to use metaphors. In Western culture, the metaphor that time is money expresses a more fundamental assumption: that time is a commodity, a limited and valuable resource. This is captured in many of our expressions for time: we waste time; we don't have time to give; someone lives on borrowed time; we lose time.

The metaphors we use for time take us in certain directions, cutting off other directions. For instance, they assume that time must be used productively, a useful concept in an industrialized society. However, leisure time also becomes a resource that is used up or wasted. Time as a resource hides alternate concepts of time in other cultures, such as that inactivity can be productive.

God is ... : We cannot see or touch God; the full reality of God is a mystery, beyond human comprehension. Whenever we talk about God, we have to do it in terms of things we can see and touch—eagles, kings, mountains ... and humans. We acknowledge that God is not human, but we must use human metaphors to describe this great mystery in terms we can comprehend.

The Bible suggests that God does not have gender, is neither male nor female. When we use human comparisons, though, we commonly use gender terms. Often those terms are male.

Some argue that it does not matter as long as we are aware that God in fact is neither male nor female. After all, metaphors such as father highlight some important dimensions of God.

But remember that metaphors are usually unconscious. They highlight some characteristics but hide others. The comparison between

.. and mother

Vernon Sigl

two different things can never be exact. Metaphors by definition make use of inexact comparisons without pointing to the fact that they are doing so. Consequently, we often overlook what is happening. The effects are so subtle that we often miss them.

When making comparisons to human characteristics, the Bible does not use only male terms. God is described also in metaphors that are female. If we hope to understand what God is like, we must explore the direction these metaphors point. We cannot rely solely on male pronouns.

In the Bible, God is father but also mother. Let yourself experience the dimensions of God suggested by this passage from Jeremiah 1:4-8 (NJB): "The word of Yahweh came to me, saying: Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you came to birth I consecrated you; I appointed you as prophet to the nation. [Jeremiah pushes out the metaphor; he is insecure] I then said, 'Ah, ah, ah, Lord Yahweh; you see, I do not know how to speak: I am only a child. But Yahweh replied, 'Do not say, I am only a child.' … Do not be afraid of confronting them for I am with you to rescue you, Yahweh declares."

Isaiah 49:14-15 talks of similar insecurities by the people of Israel who are grumbling: "Yahweh has abandoned me, the Lord has forgotten me." Isaiah responds: "Can a woman forget her baby at the breast, feel no pity for the child she has borne? Even if these were to forget, I shall not forget you."

What a reassuring image of care and nurture! What a shame it would be to deny ourselves full awareness of this dimension of God's love!

Metaphors are positive and negative: Once I was interviewing and photographing Christians in southern Sudan who were enduring the suffering of a civil war. Nyamuse Enose and I were sitting outside the church where she serves as an elder. I had asked her how she views God in the midst of it all.

She said: "A father sometimes goes away. He may put a child in another room so he can sleep. But a mother, when she is separated from her child, is uncomfortable. She will stay all night trying to comfort the child. God is like a loving mother."

Only by experiencing the potential of male and female metaphors can we participate in the fullness of God.

In the introduction to his book *A Life of Jesus*, Japanese Christian Shusaku Endo notes that the religious mentality of the Japanese has always been responsive to the one "who suffers with us" and makes allowance for our weakness, but it is intolerant of the image of a God who judges harshly, then punishes. He equates the latter with Japanese images of fathers and concludes that the Japanese have tended to be more open to images of God associated with warm-hearted mothers.

Some of us have fathers who were strong and ethical but emotionally distant or sternly disciplinarian; if that is the case, the father metaphor may have value but may not be altogether positive. If you are a woman who was abused by her father—and studies tell us that this is alarmingly common—the associations may be overwhelmingly negative and painful.

In the 20th century, skin color has profound social and political implications. People of color have been denigrated for their skin color, and images of light and dark to connote good and bad can be hurtful, reinforcing racist stereotypes. When we use metaphors, we must be aware of their context and implications, balancing them where possible by other uses of metaphor. In the passage from Isaiah (see box at right), for example, the darkness of the womb implicit in this image of maternal care reminds us that darkness can be a positive image as well as a negative one.

All this points to a simple conclusion: When we talk about God, we must use multiple metaphors. Just one will not do it. That's why the Bible uses so many: shepherd, king, eagle, man and woman.

And that's why I object to predominantly male language for God: it limits God too much. It cheats me of whole dimensions of God that are essential to my understanding of God, to my sense of reassurance, comfort and completeness. The male metaphor for God is not wrong; it is just too incomplete.

To get a feel for this, try singing the third verse of "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heavens" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, #65) as it stands, with the father image, then sing it again with a mother image. Notice the difference in how you experience the two versions.

God is too big to confine to one metaphor. The Bible recognizes this reality. It is time we did as well.

Howard Zehr teaches at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Experience the sense of assurance and support that can come from this passage from Isaiah: "Listen to me, … you who have been carried since birth, whom I have carried since the time you were born. In your old age I shall be still the same, when your hair is gray I shall still support you. I have already done so, I have carried you, I shall still support and deliver you" (Isaiah 46:3-4).

After 25 years, church gets pastor

Since it was founded more than 25 years ago, Michigan State University Mennonite Fellowship in Lansing had existed solely under lay leadership.

That changed on Jan. 23, when June Mears Driedger was installed as the fellowship's first pastor.

The installation service included a reading of the fellowship's history by charter member Ellen Mills. Don Penner, another charter member, and new elder Ken Parsons read from 1 Corinthians and Ephesians to symbolize the fellowship's interest in active partnership of lay members with the new pastor.—*Joy M. Landis*

GCMC photo by Katie Marshall

Abigail Smith was a student at Goshen (Ind.) College last fall when she decided she needed a break and joined Mennonite Voluntary Service, becoming the agency's first wheelchair-bound service worker. Her assignment is in San Antonio, Texas.

First wheelchair-bound MVSer rolls on

Spina bifida doesn't impede volunteer's ability to serve

SAN ANTONIO, Texas—Having spina bifida hasn't kept Abigail Smith from jumping into the deep waters of life, wheelchair and all. The unknown doesn't scare her, she says, because she always bobs back to the surface, buoyed by determination.

"When there was something I hadn't done before, [my parents] would make me try to do it to see if I could," Smith says. "There was no 'I can't.' "

Earlier this year, Smith became the first wheelchair-bound person to serve with Mennonite Voluntary Service in the agency's 52-year history. Her MVS assignment took her to San Antonio, a long way from the support systems of home in Illinois and college in Indiana.

Smith helps coordinate scheduling, supervises summer workers and part-time help, keeps financial records and does fund-raising at La Casa de Maria y Marta, which brings work groups to San Antonio's inner city to feed the homeless, repair low-income homes and work in child-care centers.

For MVS director Miles Reimer, Smith is an answer to prayer. "It's been a long-term problem attracting minorities and the disabled [to MVS]," he says. "But it has been getting better by increments. Abigail has given us a big push in the right direction. She's a godsend."

Smith was in her fourth year at Goshen (Ind.) College when she decided she needed a break. Not one to just lie around, Smith began looking for something meaningful to do. She had been volunteering ever since junior high school in Bluffton, Ohio, where she grew up, working at a nursing home, a hospital, and a Ten Thousand Villages store. When MVS staff were recruiting at Goshen last November, Smith signed up.

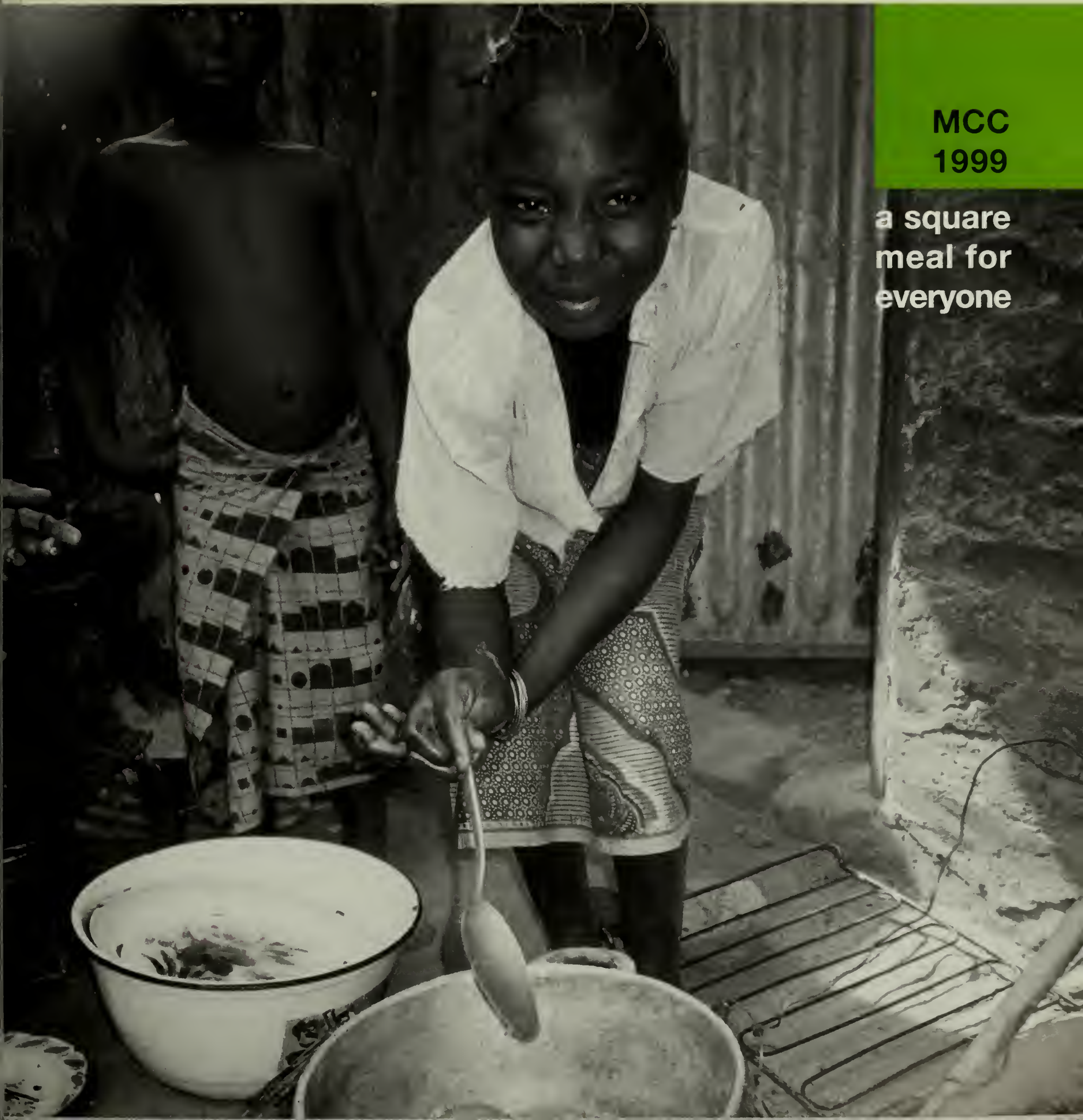
"There is almost nothing I can't handle," she says. "Fear is only a factor if the person feeling it lets it be. … I don't let it, although I will freely admit to an irrational fear of bugs and being afraid of heights."

Smith's parents, Michael and Charlene, now living in Gibson City, Ill., approved of her decision to put aside college for the time being, although it took some discussion.

Meanwhile, accommodating Smith in San Antonio was easier than expected. La Casa de Maria y Marta already had an entrance ramp to make it accessible to all work groups. Although spina bifida causes paralysis below the waist, Smith is strong enough to pull herself upstairs to the meeting room.

The San Antonio MVS support committee built a new ramp at the unit house to replace a steeper one. The only retrofitting was the installation of grab bars in the bathroom and the lowering of a mirror.

Transportation to work also hasn't been a problem because the bus is handicapped accessible.—*Harley Marshall for GCMC and MBM news services*



MCC
1999

a square meal for everyone

no money = no food

Empty pockets can't fill stomachs.

no soil = no food

You can't grow food in a mudslide.

Working to ensure that people have access to food is a central part of Mennonite Central Committee's mission. We believe food is a gift of God. When we work to ensure that all God's children have an adequate food supply, we are witnessing to God's love and grace. We believe those who have an abundant supply of food have a special responsibility to share with those who are hungry.

no peace = no food

Moving targets can't plant a garden.

no voice = no food

You can't eat when you're invisible.

food: the gift of life

Food was as important to Jesus as to us. In the Gospels we read that Jesus had meals with friends. Several of his miracles involved food. He taught us to pray "Give us this day our daily bread."

Yet nearly 800 million people do not have enough food to meet their basic requirements. India is home to 204 million hungry people. About 180 million people in sub-Sahara Africa are hungry. Ten percent of U.S. households do not always know if they will have food for the next meal. In 1997, nearly 670,000 Canadians received emergency food assistance, more than double the 1989 number.

Hunger is always distressing. Today's hunger is even more disturbing because the world has produced enough food for everyone since the mid-1970s.

So why are people hungry?

Poverty is a main reason why people are hungry. Poor people do not have money to buy enough food. They often lack information about the latest cultivation practices. They likely do not own land and so cannot grow food.

Some people are hungry because they belong to a certain racial or ethnic group. **Discrimination** causes hunger, malnutrition and poverty, for example, for black people in South Africa, indigenous people in Latin America, and Christians and animists in southern Sudan. "Hispanic farm workers in the United States have shorter life spans due to the back-breaking labor they do and exposure to pesticides," observes José Ortiz, MCC U.S. executive director. "In part due to their skin color, they are trapped in low-paying jobs and cannot afford to eat the oranges, celery, lettuce and other foods they help produce and harvest. Even the oxen, in biblical times, were able to eat the grain they were treading (Deuteronomy 25:4)."

Women produce half of the world's food. Yet 60 to 80 percent of the women of child-bearing age living in the developing world do not have enough calories for good

Mrs. Dee, an artisan in Laos, weaves wall hangings, cushion covers and other products that Ten Thousand Villages sells through a network of nearly 200 stores in North America. Mrs. Dee is part of the Phon Tong Handicraft Cooperative that started in 1980 in villages around Vientiane, the capital. She and the other co-op members intersperse weaving and basket making with housework and childcare. The income she earns helps her buy food, education, health care and housing for her family. Ten Thousand Villages, a nonprofit marketing program of MCC, provides vital, fair income to Third World artisans.

wages = food

health. In the United States, close to 60 percent of families headed by single women live in poverty.

War causes hunger. When bullets are flying, no one stays around to grow food or sell it. Soldiers plunder gardens and fields. Nor does the end of war mean people can grow food again. Worldwide, 60 to 100 million land mines litter fields that farmers do not farm for fear of being killed. Fear of each other, stemming from war, also pollutes the bonds people need to live together after war.

Natural disasters cause hunger. Floods destroy houses, villages and warehouses, and wash away soil and stored seeds. Droughts lead to crop failures. Wind and water erode soil.

Natural disasters are not the only culprits; human disasters cause hunger too. Corporations dump industrial and mining wastes into rivers and oceans, killing fish and other life. **Economic trends and government decisions** create hunger. In 1997, 1 billion people lived in nations that owed more than $2 trillion U.S. Their leaders work to pay off these debts rather than invest in health care, education or agriculture. They encourage farmers to grow cash crops rather than food. Sanctions against Iraq, set in place in 1990 to force President Saddam Hussein and his regime to reform, instead push civilians to the brink of starvation.

How did we respond?

In 1999, MCC shared food—16,400 tons of wheat, corn, sorghum, rice, milk powder, legumes, canola oil—with hungry people in 25 countries, **double the amount of food provided in 1998.** "Needs were extraordinary," notes Willie Reimer, MCC's food aid coordinator. This food was enough to feed the equivalent of 30 million people for a day, using calculations that people need 2,040 calories a day.

In October two cyclones struck the Indian state of Orissa. Torrential rains washed away people, homes and belongings. The sea flooded lush rice fields, destroying the harvest in an area known as Orissa's rice-bowl. MCC provided rice that went as wages to 13,500 people who cleaned up after the storm in community-initiated food-for-work programs. "They worked about 15 days each and

HIGHLIGHTS 1999

- The first shipment of food arrives in Honduras for Hurricane Mitch victims. The first "Work and Learn" team goes to Central America to help rebuild. In 1999, MCC shared 8,700 tons of food, 50,000 relief kits, three tractors, plus clothing and school and health kits.
- MCC begins a drought relief project in northeast Brazil, digging wells and supplying emergency water.
- "Change of Command" premieres, a video featuring the faith stories of military personnel who became conscientious objectors.
- MCC Canada begins paying a self-imposed surcharge equal to 10 percent of its monthly hydro-electric bill to a trust fund established by the Pimicikamak Cree Nation at Cross Lake, Man., as a way to meet some of the public's unfulfilled obligations to Cross Lake.
- MCC Ontario opens a Niagara office in St. Catharines. Other offices opened in Goshen, Ind., and Edinburg, Texas, during the year.
- NATO starts bombing Serbia. MCC ships 52,850 refugee kits, food, medicine, comforters and other basics. Cash contributions also support peace work there.
- An MCC worker joins the refugee assistance program of the German Mennonites.
- With MCC and Amish loans, a Kanadier village in Mexico buys 200 heifers to improve dairy herds.

"Neighbors After All: A biblical approach to Immigration," is the theme of a spring seminar sponsored by the Washington, D.C., office.

Five hundred people from across Ontario assemble on Parliament Hill in Ottawa to sing hymns and pray for peace in the Balkans.

Alberta's Employment Development program wins a prestigious award from the City of Calgary for "improving business opportunities within the city." The program provides credit and training for people who want to find a job or start a business.

The first annual Central Missouri relief sale is held. 1999 was also the first year for a western Maryland/Pennsylvania relief sale in McHenry, Md. In 1999, 40 relief sales raised $7 million Cdn./$4.7 million U.S. for MCC work.

María Gómez and Mónica Baez start a weekly Sonflower club for girls, ages 6 to 12, at Faith Mennonite Church in Fresno, Calif. Gomez says: "We wanted to focus on each girl's uniqueness and how they could grow into godly women." Baez and Gomez were two of 72 participants in the U.S. Summer Service program.

Edgar and Rebecca Lehman from Chambersburg, Pa., retire after making 37 tons of soap for MCC to send overseas.

Siberian farmers visit British Columbia, the second part of an exchange between Siberia and British Columbia farmers.

received family-size portions, so we calculate about 70,000 people benefitted," observes Willie Reimer.

1999's largest shipment—6,700 metric tons of wheat—went to Bangladesh where people are still recovering from floods that forced 94 million people from their homes in 1998. MCC also shared 8,700 tons of food, primarily corn, and other aid with people in Honduras and Nicaragua who lost crops and homes when Hurricane Mitch decimated Central America. We provided food to hungry people in Russia, the Ukraine and North Korea.

Ten workers in Canada served hungry, malnourished people. In Winnipeg, for example, Vladimir Bär, Kornelius Penner and Don Harms served at a large food bank program, delivering food, collecting donations and taking calls from people needing food. Volunteers in Washington, D.C., served meals and befriended homeless people at a soup kitchen.

"We could share this food because Mennonites, Brethren in Christ and others were moved with compassion," says Ronald J.R. Mathies, MCC executive director. Canadians donated 4,389 metric tons of grain and $950,562 Cdn./ $641,629 U.S. to MCC's account at the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. More than 10,000 volunteers in 13 states and Ontario canned 362,449 cans of meat and broth.

MCC also feeds hungry people by **providing opportunities to earn a living**. We create jobs for overseas artisans so they can feed, clothe and shelter their families. The sale of crafts by Ten Thousand Villages created more than 13,000 full-time jobs in 32 countries, benefitting more than 65,000 people. "The women in Bangladesh who make paper from hyacinth or weave jute into gifts told me: 'We now have work, so our children can eat,'" reported Ronald J.R. Mathies after a summer visit.

Another way we prevent hunger is by **dismantling racism**. The MCC U.S. Racism Awareness Program trained more than 175 people to dismantle racism. Wrote one person after such a training session: "This experience and teaching will be a lifestyle change, with much more to come."

In India we supported Jan Uthan Samity, a local agency, in its work to

Santiago Soza talks with international visitors about the importance of preserving Nicaragua's rainforests during a horse-back trip through the Bosawas rainforest. Santiago works at an experimental farm, searching for new crops to cultivate. "The rainforest brings us water, food and life. Traditionally, farmers slash and burn forest lands, planting corn and beans, crops that deplete the soil. Fruit trees are a good alternative," Santiago explains. MCC environmentalist Paul Hershberger works with Santiago and other members of the El Hormigero Eco-Tourism Committee to preserve the Bosawas rainforest.

caretaking = food

transform the lives of tribal women in Bihar. In 1988, when Cynthia Peacock first visited these women, she says, "You could see hunger in their faces. They ate only once a day—rice and salt." Today their sons and daughters attend school; no child has died from diarrhea in five years. In 1999 they started an income generation plan to buy pigs, chickens and fruit trees. And they are advocating for one of their members to be the local rations agent, so tribal people are not overlooked when rations are distributed.

In Canada, MCC helped the community of Poplar River First Nation in Manitoba set up a project to can fresh fruits and vegetables, initiatives to help fight the poor nutrition and diabetes prevalent among First Nations people. The Aboriginal Neighbours summer project placed eight volunteers in five First Nations communities to help local gardeners grow fresh vegetables. "A recent survey shows that in Canada the best-off First Nations communities compare only with the worst-off areas of non-Aboriginal Canada," says Marv Frey, who served as MCC Canada executive director from 1995 until December 1999.

Another way MCC ensures a square meal for everyone is by **promoting peace**. Peace workers in the Balkans sowed seeds of peace. In 1999 we devoted more than $3 million Cdn./$2 million U.S. to local peace initiatives overseas. More than 40 workers joined families, communities and nations working to build peace.

MCC alleviates hunger by **restoring the earth**. Cheryl Delaplane, worker in Mozambique, joined women working to unclog irrigation ditches. "The past six months have been a blur of visits to fields of lettuce, kale and tomatoes," she wrote. The women work in water above their waists, removing mud and roots from the ditches. Five associations cleaned ditches and water flows again. Five more associations want to do the same. "I still have not mastered singing and dancing in rubber boots, pants, a skirt and with a hoe in hand, but I'm getting good practice," Cheryl smiles.

In drought-prone areas of Kenya's Rift Valley, hundreds of people built seven dams on each of two rivers. Now water for households and livestock is plentiful, wrote Larry Loewen-Rutgers after a visit to

Two ecologists go to Honduras to help the Mennonite Social Action Commission there add an environmental component in each program.

Ten Thousand Villages opens a store in Princeton, N.J. Seven others open in 1999, three in Canada, four in the United States.

Mennonite Conciliation Service (MSC) releases a new video "Conflict in the Church," introducing alternative ways to view conflicts. MCS, with Herald Press, also published a book "Making Peace With Conflict."

Uganda hosts its first SALT worker, Rachel Klassen. SALT enables young people to spend a year overseas, serving and learning.

645 people travel to Kentucky to help 61 families repair their homes through the SWAP (Sharing with Appalachian People) program. "Rejoice with us as we celebrate all God has done this summer in Kentucky," write Scott and Julie Siemens, SWAP directors.

West Coast MCC dries 4,200 pounds of fruit, which is then sold at relief sales to raise money for MCC.

Mozambique and Uganda send their first participants to the International Visitor Exchange Program, a one-year program that has brought 2,800 youth from 73 countries to North America since 1950.

Community Ministries workers go to a several-day Anti-Racism Workshop led by Damascus Road, an MCC U.S. anti-racism training program.

advocacy = food

Nedal Mohammed Zyirah holds her son Abdul at the Basra (Iraq) Red Crescent Center where women bring their children to be weighed and measured, and to receive supplemental food including some MCC beans. U.N. sanctions against Iraq, set in place in 1990 to force President Saddam Hussein and his regime to reform, instead have pushed many civilians to the brink of starvation. More than 1 million Iraqi children have died because of the sanctions. The situation is "devastating the country through the application of policy that is morally bankrupt," observed Ronald J.R. Mathies after a November visit to Iraq. One of the youngest people to call for the end of sanctions was Rose Byler, 8, of Goshen, Ind. She sent U.S. Representative John Spratt, Jr., a package of food that equaled the weekly food ration available to Iraqi citizens under the U.N. oil-for-food program. With the package of food was a letter that said: "Dear Mr. Spratt, This is not enough food for a week! My family would eat this in less than a day. Please lift the sanctions."

reconciliation = food

Bishop Macleord Baker Ochola stands beside the pick-up in which his wife, Winifred Ochola II, was killed; she and a number of other people died when the pick-up drove over a landmine. Her death sharpened the bishop's resolve, not for revenge, but for peace. Since 1986 thousands of civilians have been victims of government-rebel violence in northern Uganda; the rebels have also kidnaped about 10,000 children, some as young as 7, and forced them to return home to their villages to kill relatives. Bishop Ochola and other members of The Acholi Religious Leaders Peace Initiative train local leaders to work with communities to untangle the distrust, bitterness and fear. MCC supports this peace initiative and others in Uganda. Church members in northern Uganda also, thanks to MCC, could share 62 tons of food, 8 tons of seed and 12,500 hoes with people in need.

the dams. Vegetables, maize, beans and trees are growing well. 1999 was the first year we supported this five-year project.

In an arid region of China, we are helping farmers construct cisterns and terrace hillsides. In Bolivia, agriculturists show community groups how to use legumes as green manures and how to store and market grains. Others join women's groups in experiments to see which varieties of corn grow best.

MCC also worked to eliminate hunger by **advocating for just trade laws and economic policies** that benefit everyone. MCC joined Jubilee 2000, a coalition calling for the alleviation of Third World debt. We called for the end of sanctions against Iraq. Workers in Ottawa successfully urged the Canadian government to match the amount of food MCC sent to Iraq and North Korea.

What will we do next?

Who knows how many people will be hungry in 2005? But MCC will certainly do all it can to ensure people have three square meals a day. "If the extreme, unusual weather patterns persist, we will have more requests for food," observes Elaine Peters, resource manager for MCC. **"We'll likely focus our relief work in places where we have partners and with those who are overlooked.** We will also do more agricultural development so people can feed themselves."

This commitment to food producers will likely be tougher with the increasing prevalence of biotechnology. Some promote biotechnology as the solution to world hunger. MCC fears the industry's practices may drive farmers off their land and erode their security. The industry, for example, does not allow farmers to save hybrid seeds from year to year because the germplasm is patented by the agribusinesses that funded the genetic research.

Can hunger be eliminated in the next century? It can if we continue to send food, restore respectful relationships among people and work to heal God's creation. **We also need to refuse to accept the existence of hunger.** By ensuring that all 6 billion people have three square meals a day, we demonstrate the love of God who created us all. ●

- **A new Sunday School curriculum in Canada, "Becoming a More Caring Congregation," helps churches welcome people living with mental illness, disabilities and other stresses.**
- **MCC and Rosedale Mennonite Missions agree to provide winterized tents, school kits and other aid to people who lost their homes in Turkey's earthquake.**
- **A new Thrift, Furniture and Appliance Store opens in Mission, B.C. Earlier a new thrift store had opened in Strasburg, Pa. The 90 MCC thrift stores raised $7.6 million Cdn./$5 million U.S. in 1999.**
- **An Arthur, Ill., committee breaks ground for a House against Hunger. In 1999 four Houses against Hunger were sold, raising money for MCC.**
- **A deadly "super" cyclone strikes India. MCC supports local water purification and food-for-work programs.**
- **MCC celebrates 50 years of work in Palestine with a 10-day anniversary tour and the release of *Salt & Sign*, a book commemorating MCC work there.**
- **Children at secondary schools in Baghdad, Iraq, receive school kits from Carmen Pauls, aid worker there. Children in 13 other countries also received school kits in 1999. The total shared—91,473—was more than double the average of the past seven years.**

I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received … Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:1b-3 (NIV)

Where we were in 1999

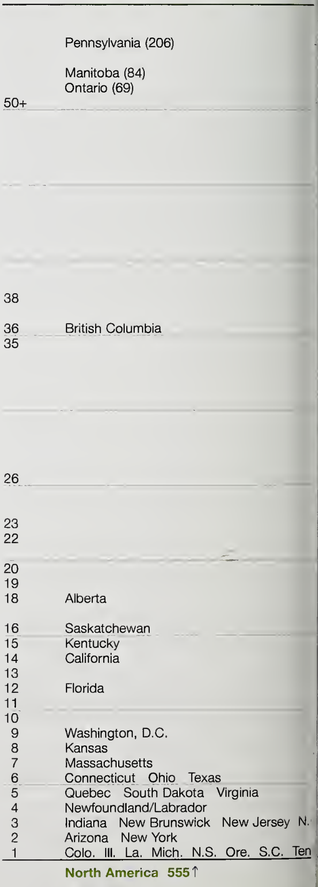
At year-end MCC had 1,412 workers in 56 countries. (In 1998 1,343 workers were in 57 countries.) They shared their skills in community development, peacemaking, education, health, food production and administration. They joined local initiatives for change rather than "doing their own thing."

Careful readers will notice two changes in this year's chart. First, we have listed the provinces and states where people serve. In the past, these workers were listed by country only in a table at the side. Now we can see the breadth of our work in North America.

Secondly, this year's chart includes locally employed people, reflecting our desire to recognize their contributions to MCC. They were not listed before since they were not appointed by the MCC boards. Yet they are crucial to our work. Our ministry in Bolivia, for example, would be greatly diminished without the 22 Bolivians who serve with MCC as program administrators, secretaries and in other assignments, some for more than 10 years. (Of this year's total, 893 are board appointed, up from last year's 841.)

This chart clearly does not include everyone vital to our work. We've only included those who serve 12 months or more. Not included, therefore, are 72 Summer Service workers who served in their home communities for 10 weeks. Neither do we include the 506 people who went to Honduras and Nicaragua to rebuild after Hurricane Mitch and to Guatemala to help build a seminary and education center. Also "missing" are thousands of volunteers who quilt, work at thrift shops and relief sales, or give time in other ways to MCC. We could not carry out our service "In the name of Christ" without the hours, weeks and years of time our workers and supporters share with us. ●

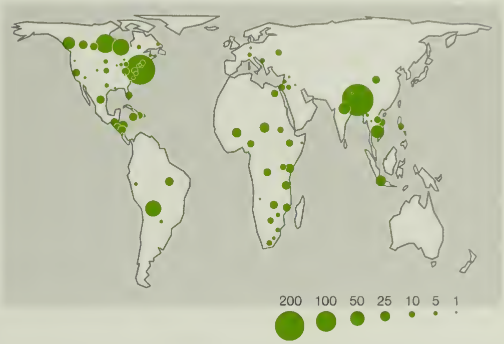
Number of MCC personnel



Will Braun researched and educated people about the adverse effects of hydro-electric development on the aboriginal people of Cross Lake in northern Manitoba.

ember 30, 1999)

* new location for workers
↑ increase from 1998
↓ decrease from 1998



Asia 391 ↓	Africa 209 ↑	Latin America 196 ↑	Middle East 36 ↓	Europe 25 ↑	
Bangladesh (234)					
		Bolivia (61)			
Cambodia					
ndia					
ndonesia					26
	Chad				23
	Burkina Faso				22
		Jamaica			20
	Kenya	Honduras			19
	Tanzania	Brazil			18
China	Zambia	Mexico Nicaragua			16
	Congo Mozambique				15
Laos					14
	Ethiopia Nigeria	Guatemala Haiti	Egypt		13
Vietnam					12
	Uganda	El Salvador	West Bank	Ukraine	11
	Botswana Sudan				10
Philippines					9
	South Africa				8
					7
			Jordan	The Balkans	6
	Swaziland Zimbabwe			Switzerland	5
			Lebanon		4
Burma	Lesotho	Paraguay Peru			3
Nepal	Somalia	Costa Rica	Syria	Germany	2
raq Thailand*	Angola	Cuba		Northern Ireland	1

Kamran Naha taught illiterate farmer's wives the basics of health and personal hygiene n Companyganj, Bangladesh.

Jon Miller helped residents build ferro-cement tanks, bio-gas digestors and other appropriate technologies in Masaka, Uganda.

Shelia Morton volunteered at a day therapy and shelter program for the mentally ill in Montego Bay, Jamaica.

Jane Emile-Wagler taught pre-kindergarten children in a day-care center in Damascus, Syria.

Harold Otto assisted refugees and supported peace efforts in the Balkans.

A record year for contributions in 1999

Records were broken this year. In 1999 MCC's shipments of material resources shot up by almost 75 percent, to $21.1 million Cdn./$14.2 million U.S., compared with $12.1 million Cdn./ $8.1 million U.S. last year. Refugee kits, packed by supporters in response to needs in the Balkans, boosted these numbers. Some 55,000 refugee kits were donated, surpassing even the 52,000 hurricane relief buckets for Central America. Supporters in Canada and the United States also made it possible for MCC to provide 175,000 pounds of clothing, 91,000 school kits, 39,000 blankets and other basic supplies.

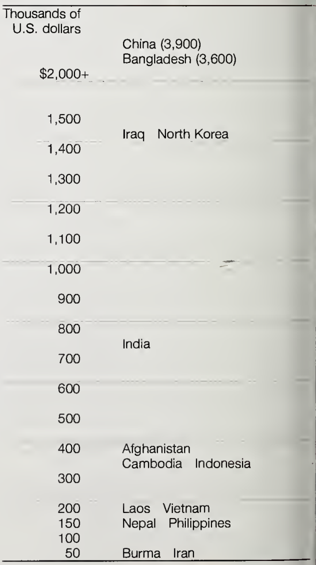
Estimated total cash and in-kind income received by all MCC offices—local, national and binational—grew to $103.5 million Cdn./ $69.4 million U.S., a 28 percent increase from 1998. Income from our church constituency accounted for 58 percent of the total.

Estimated expenses for all MCC offices totaled $99.7 million Cdn./ $66.9 million U.S., a 34 percent increase from 1998. The amount spent for overseas programs skyrocketed by 61 percent, largely due to emergency responses. Expenditures on U.S. programs increased 13 percent while Canadian programs had a 6-percent decrease. Of total expenses, 9.3 percent went for general administration and fund raising.

Ten Thousand Villages sales increased by 19 percent while growth in operating expenses was held to 17 percent, resulting in a successful financial year. Ten Thousand Villages retail sales created the equivalent of more than 13,000 full-time jobs in 1999.

The consolidated data summarizes the activity of 12 MCC entities as reported in seven financial statements in Canada and the United States. Audited financial statements are available from any MCC office. ●

International progra



Asia $13,435,000↑

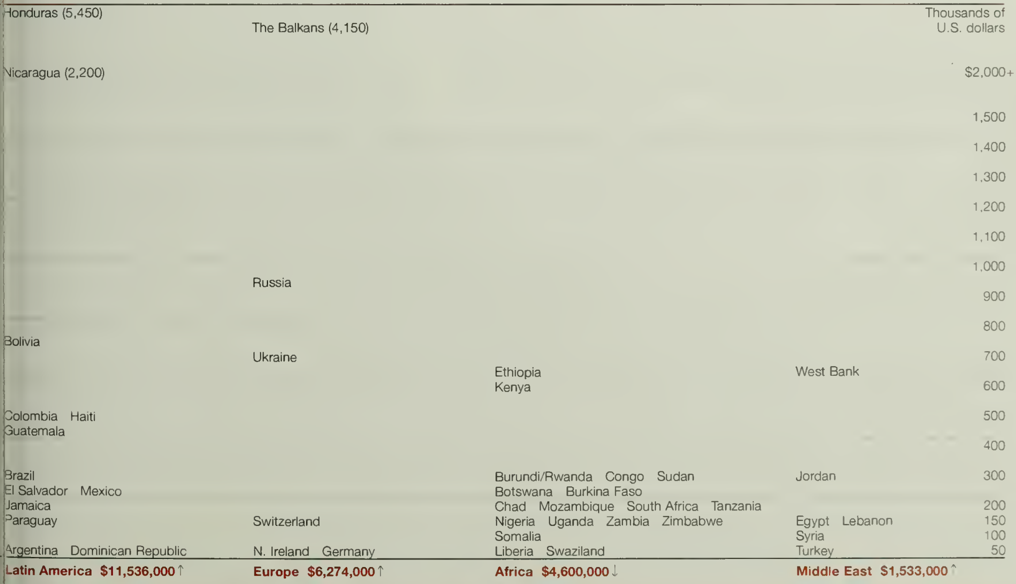
$3.10 Cdn./ $2 U.S. provided training for one birth attendant in Akkanampattu, India.

INCOME		U.S. dollars
Cash gifts		**$21,190,000** ↑
Canadian contributors	8,134,000	
U.S. contributors	12,591,000	
Other contributors	465,000	
Gifts-in-kind		**9,332,000** ↑
Grants		**13,696,000** ↑
Non-governmental	394,000	
Governmental	13,302,000	
Shops, relief sales, houses		**9,642,000** ↑
Other income		**3,163,000** ↓
Ten Thousand Villages sales		**12,414,000** ↑
TOTAL INCOME		**$69,437,000** ↑

↑ increase from 1998 ↓ decrease from 1998

EXPENSES			U.S. dollars
International program			**$38,963,000** ↑
Country program (see chart below for detail)		37,378,000	
Other overseas program		1,585,000	
North American program			**9,711,000** ↓
Canada program		6,530,000	
Community Ministries	5,476,000		
Peace and Justice Ministries	665,000		
Material resources collection	389,000		
United States program		3,181,000	
Community Ministries	1,611,000		
Peace and Justice Ministries	969,000		
Material resources collection	601,000		
Support and administration			**5,146,000** ↑
Fundraising			**1,056,000** ↑
Ten Thousand Villages operating expenses			**12,039,000** ↑
TOTAL EXPENSES			**$66,915,000** ↑

penses (cash and material resources)



$155 Cdn./$100 U.S. purchased raw materials for one woman to start her own business, a hamburger stand in Santa Cruz, Bolivia.

$3,075 Cdn./$2,000 U.S. allowed Victor Bogdanov to assist in evangelism among the deaf in Vladikavkaz, Russia.

$18.50 Cdn./$12 U.S. bought a bag of cement for the village catchment dam in the Gwozo Hills of Nigeria.

$15.40 Cdn. $10 U.S. supplied a set of four workbooks for a kindergarten student in Al Kom El Akhdar, Egypt.

four fun ways to feed friends

Visit a Village near you

1 Shop for international handicrafts at Ten Thousand Villages where every purchase provides vital, fair income to Third World people who would otherwise be unemployed or under-employed. This income helps them pay for food, education, health care and housing.

To locate a store near you, phone (717) 859-8100 in the United States or (519) 662-1879 in Canada or visit their website at <www.tenthousandvillages.org>.

Give to Korean farmers

2 Farmers in North Korea work hard to grow crops. They spread fertilizer by hand without exact information about what nutrients are missing. $15 will buy a canvas-bag broadcast fertilizer spreader. $50 will buy a soil test kit. Please send contributions designated for "North Korean farmers" to your nearest MCC office listed below.

Discover new worlds

3 Put your agricultural skills to work. You could improve production and organize sales for small-plot farmers in Ukraine, develop a better treatment system for animals in Haiti or assist with poultry or livestock research in Bangladesh. To find out more about these and other exciting opportunities at home or abroad, contact your nearest MCC office listed below.

Make a dream come true

4 Sponsor an individual, family or community overseas for only $22 Cdn./$17 U.S. per month. Your money can help parents send their children to school, provide meals for orphans or support vocational training for a young adult. Contact the MCC Global Family Program in Akron or Winnipeg at the address listed below.

Front cover: Constance Salome in Gounou-Gaya, Chad, prepares food for her family. Forty percent of Chadian children are malnourished; 14 percent, emaciated. One of five children dies before the age of 5. In 1999 MCC responded to chronic food shortages in Chad by assisting 32 community grain banks, establishing a group of women grain bank organizers, researching the feasibility of dry-season gardening as well as evaluating MCC's capacity to provide food relief to Chadian communities through church partners. MCC also trained teams to build village and garden wells in one of Chad's driest regions.

Mennonite Central Committee

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Proposal for new Great Lakes-area conference emphasizes congregation-centered mission work

ELKHART, Ind.—Since congregations are at the heart of church mission efforts, that should be reflected in new church structures, decided a committee bringing a proposal for an integrated area conference in the Great Lakes region.

According to the plan, the current Central District, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences will form one new area conference—nearly 34,000 members in 255 congregations stretching from western Pennsylvania to eastern Missouri and from northern Michigan to Tennessee. It would be called Great Lakes Conference.

But rather than one massive conference directing outreach, Great Lakes would be divided into nine geographic "mission districts" of 20 to 40 congregations responsible for local and regional efforts. "Their primary task is to start new congregations, attract new people to their current congregations," says committee chair Mark Weidner.

The proposal now goes to delegates from the four area conferences for feedback. They will meet in June in Goshen, Ind., for a joint conference. Action on a final proposal could come the following year. The four conferences' delegates two years ago approved plans to explore realigning the area conferences.

The proposal calls on each member congregation to be engaged in at least one local mission project, one district project and one overseas project. Each mission district would be staffed by a district minister and a youth minister.

Among the core values in the committee's proposal are the need for flexibility, primary role of congregations in mission work and the role of the area conference in providing resources and fostering networks. Another core value is the trend to urbanization. Each mission district would include at least one urban area, such as Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Milwaukee and Nashville, Tenn.

The mission districts will be further broken down into "mission cells" of five to nine congregations. "The purpose of the cells is just to be accountable to one another," Weidner says.

Discussions and concerns about congregational faith and practice would be addressed within the mission cells, according to the proposal. A congregation may be placed under conference discipline only upon its cell's recommendation.

While most outreach efforts will be generated at the local levels, the area conference will largely have only administrative responsibilities, such as a conference executive, executive council, nominating committee, program committee and historical committee. Each mission district would have two representatives on a conference mission council.—*Rich Preheim*

Proposed conference gets name

MANSON, Iowa—They have the name. Now they just need the area conference on which to pin it.

Representatives from Iowa-Nebraska, Northern District and Central District area conferences met in a special assembly at Manson on Feb. 12 to approve Central Plains as the name for a new integrated area conference. Action on the creation of the new conference is expected in June at a joint session of Iowa-Nebraska and Northern District delegates in Freeman, S.D.

In 1998, Iowa-Nebraska, Northern District and North Central Conference voted to realign their three area conferences into one northern and one southern conference. Central Plains is the name for the southern conference. The four Central District congregations in Iowa have been invited to join Central Plains.

In addition to the name vote, meeting participants discussed a conference mission statement, proposed bylaws, staffing needs and conference membership.

One congregation, Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis, has full membership in Northern District but "sanctioned" membership in Iowa-Nebraska as a result of its position on homosexuality. According to transitional guidelines, all congregations would come into the new conference with their current membership status. That means Faith would be both a full and a sanctioned member of Central Plains. After one year, membership issues would be addressed according to Central Plains bylaws.

The proposed bylaws call for any congregation not holding to the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective on any issue to be placed on provisional membership.—*The Challenge* with *Mennonite Weekly Review*

North Central shares concerns but not leaving

North Central Conference has added its voice to those raising concerns about the new Mennonite Church and how it may view Scripture. But unlike others in the church, the conference emphasized that it is not withdrawing.

"We find the vision of a unified [Mennonite Church] USA compelling," the conference said in a statement composed at its annual pastor-spouse retreat March 3-5. "However, we hold that such unity must ultimately spring not from the vision itself but rather from our common commitment to absolute truth, which is the Bible, and from our common relationship with our God, to whom we, above all else, desire to remain faithful."

The statement was signed by all 16 North Central pastors and overseers and their wives.

The statement came in the wake of a decision made last month at a meeting in Smoketown, Pa., to form a new alliance apart from the emerging Mennonite Church USA. North Central is in "unanimous agreement with the concerns" of the Smoketown group, the statement said.

MCC Bangladesh program a has-bean

Pioneer soybean work concludes after sprouting success

DHAKA, Bangladesh—Three decades ago, there was nary an acre of soybeans to be found in Bangladesh. Today, thanks to Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), the protein-rich legume is planted in more than 10,000 acres, providing financial and nutritional benefits to many of the country's people.

Having become one of MCC's greatest success stories, the agency closed its 27-year-old soybean program at the end of December 1999.

"The program's objectives have been met," says Shyam Chakraborty, a Bangladeshi who served as MCC's soybean program officer. "Without our help, farmers are now planting and preserving seeds and selling soybeans. We've done our job."

MCC brought soybeans to Bangladesh, where the crop was previously unknown, from the United States in the early 1970s, believing the crop would be an ideal source of protein for Bangladeshis who could not afford meat. Soybeans could also be grown in the dry season when the weather was unsuitable for rice.

At first, soybeans did not flourish, and MCC workers had to placate and encourage frustrated farmers who wanted to give up. After years of trial and error, the right soybean varieties were found. MCC helped develop techniques so farmers could store the seeds effectively in one of the world's wettest climates. Planting dates were determined to fine-tune yields.

MCC gradually developed expertise not only in planting and growing soybeans but also in promoting them. Availability of seeds was a problem, to which MCC responded by establishing a program of storing seeds for resale to farmers. That program also closed last year.

To encourage use of the unfamiliar crop, MCC bought back soybeans and sold them at reduced rates or gave them away. MCC extensionists traveled widely, giving cooking demonstrations to introduce soybeans as a supplement to rice.

Soybeans did not, however, immediately catch on. Women complained that they cooked the bean but it never softened, wasting precious fuel. After much experimentation, an acceptable method was found of roasting and then crushing the beans before cooking them.

In the early 1990s, poultry farms, looking for protein for feed, discovered soybeans. Today 9 percent of Bangladesh's soybean yield is eaten, 8 percent is saved for seed and the rest marketed primarily to poultry farmers.

Farmer Siddique Ullah (left) and Shyam Chakraborty, a Bangladeshi who headed Mennonite Central Committee's soybean program, examine new soybean plants. Twenty-seven years after bringing the protein-rich legume to Bangladesh, MCC closed its soybean program at the end of 1999.

MCC photo by Anita Fieguth

Although soybeans have not become popular staples in people's diets, MCC has helped create an industry that today pumps hundreds of thousands of dollars into local village economies. Laborers who couldn't find jobs and had to leave their families in search of work in bigger cities can now earn wages planting, harvesting and threshing soybeans. Farmers who once allowed their land to sit fallow during the dry season can enjoy extra income from their soybean crops. Dealers have sprung up across the country to help move beans from the producer to the users. And the poultry industry benefits by not having to import protein from other countries.

Fourteen years ago, Siddique Ullah became the first person in the Jahaz Mara area to grow soybeans. Through his positive experiences, many other local people in his area now grow and eat soybeans as well. Ullah recalls how his family at first did not like the beans' smell or the texture. But last year, he and his extended family ate 440 pounds of soybeans.

"Before, when we had problems with our soybean plants or seeds, we ran to MCC," Ullah says. "Now we have learned to take care of ourselves."

MCC has 10 expatriate workers and 224 locally hired personnel in Bangladesh. MCC started its Bangladesh program in 1970.
—Anita Fieguth and Allen Sebes for MCC News Service

EMU athlete hits new heights

Laura Rosenberger went where no one had ever gone before when she won the pole vault at the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division III national indoor championship meet on March 10 in Bloomington, Ill.

Rosenberger, a freshman at Eastern Mennonite University, became the first national track and field champion from the Harrisonburg, Va., school. What's more, she is the first NCAA Division III women's pole vault champion, as this was the first year for the event.

Rosenberger, who came into the national championship meet as the top-ranked pole vaulter in the country, cleared a record 12 feet, 4 inches. She beat her closest competitor by eight inches.

"It's very exciting, especially being a freshman," says Rosenberger, who began vaulting only three years ago as a high school junior.

She is from State College, Pa., where she is a member of University Mennonite Church.—*Harrisonburg News-Record*

Fourth generation continues family's tradition of service

ELKHART, Ind.—The family does not always fare well in Jesus' public discourse. He calls his disciples to leave home and parents and discounts family lineage. He even proclaims that those who don't reject their families aren't his disciples.

While some might argue that families and family responsibilities could obstruct the church's work, one family has built an inspiring mission legacy through family ties. For four generations, the P. A. Friesen family has served the church through long-term assignments with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

"Generations of Friesens have gone a long way from home," says Jonathan Friesen, the newest Friesen to serve. "They have been instrumental to me in having me live out my faith. That's become a big part ... of who I am because that's something they taught me through their actions."

Jonathan and his wife, Kristin, last July began a two-year term as Service Adventure leaders in Raleigh, N.C. Service Adventure is a short-term program for 18- to 20-year-olds.

Jonathan attributes his commitment to lessons he learned from his family. "My grandparents graduated from Goshen (Ind.) College one day, got married the next and were on a boat to India one month later at the beginning of a war," he says.

The Friesen legacy started in 1907, when Jonathan's great-grandparents, Peter A. and Helena Friesen, went to India with MBM. Their son John A. and his wife, Genevieve, served in India for 43 years, retiring in 1981. Two of their sons also served with MBM. J. Stanley and his wife, Delores—Jonathan's parents—have served long- and short-term assignments in Botswana, Ghana, Nigeria and Liberia over the past 25 years. Weldon and his wife, Luetta, were in India from 1968 to 1971.

"We were aware that there was something special, something different about the work of our parents," says Weldon. "There was a long tradition there."

But it was more than just the Friesen family that shaped succeeding generations. Spouses also came from families with strong mission views. Genevieve's family were ministers, deacons and active church members. Luetta shared Weldon's desire for mission work. And Delores grew up in a family that featured several pastors, including pioneers of mission efforts in Arkansas.

Jonathan admits sacrifices are made when families commit themselves to a life of mission and service. Going on an assignment often means moving away from family and missing family events.

"That shouldn't be interpreted as though we are not close," he says. "It is just not a physical or geographic closeness. What ties our family together are values and character—values of service to the church and to others."—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*

> Generations of Friesens ... have been instrumental to me in having me live out my faith.
>
> —*Jonathan Friesen*

A Continuing Education Seminar

Pastoral Counseling in Context

August 4, 6:30 p.m. through August 5, 4:15 p.m.

Featuring Daniel Schipani, Ph.D., Psy.D., AMBS;
Mesach Krisetya, D.Min., from Indonesia;
Lies B. van der Zee, Dr. Phil., from The Netherlands

A dynamic, participatory workshop in which presenters will offer cases from their cultural settings, identifying common and differing features of pastoral counseling.

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by the way ...

After winning an 1837 election for county commissioner by 25 votes, Pennsylvania Mennonite Abraham O. Fretz yielded the office after a judge ruled that 39 blacks had voted for him, a violation of "sacred rights" of whites.—*Peace, Faith, Nation* by Theron K. Schlabach

Mennonite Health Assembly set for March 23-26

WILLIAMSBURG, Va.—Hundreds of health-care professionals are expected for the annual Mennonite Health Assembly to be held March 23-26 in Williamsburg and sponsored by Mennonite Health Services and Mennonite Mutual Aid. Participants will include health-care administrators, executives, nurses, physicians, social workers, chaplains, psychologists, counselors, trustees, pastors and congregational health promoters.

Featured speakers will include Ginny Thornburgh, director of the Religion and Disability Program of the National Organization on Disability; John Neufeld, former president of Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg; Harold Koening, director of the Center for the Study of Religion/Spirituality and Health at Duke University Medical Center; and Shirley Showalter, president of Goshen (Ind.) College.

$150,000 gift boosts mission consultation

ELKHART, Ind.—An international Mennonite mission consultation to be held this summer has received an anonymous donation of $150,000. The donation was made through the New Century of Mission campaign, sponsored by the Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Church Canada.

The consultation, scheduled for July in Guatemala, is expected to draw Mennonite World Conference General Council members and representatives from the mission and service agencies of MWC members. They will discuss potential new structures for partnership and accountability for global outreach efforts.—*MBM News Service*

Speaker: Pastoral shortage requires cooperation

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Mennonites need to stop blaming each other for the current shortage of pastors and starting working together to call new leaders, said a speaker at a Feb. 26 consultation on pastoral ministry held at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg.

Churches cry that seminaries "don't make pastors like they used to," said Ed Stoltzfus of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM). Seminaries respond, "We train the people you send us."

Stoltzfus said that calling leaders is a shared responsibility that needs to receive higher priority from everyone: congregations, schools, church agencies and current pastors.

MBCM has a list of 140 ministerial openings in General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church congregations. But the agency has a list of only about 30 people looking for pastoral assignments.

Goshen finds new SST location after coup

GOSHEN, Ind.—Two Goshen College officials left for Mali on March 15 to prepare for the school's new Study-Service Term location. In the wake of a December 1999 coup in Ivory Coast, the college decided in February to relocate its French-language SST to Mali for at least one term.

David Mosley, Goshen associate professor of music and humanities, and his wife, Kathleen Massanari, will have six weeks to finalize host families, service opportunities and guest lectures before the group of 22 Goshen students arrives at the end of April.

SST is a 13-week term set in an international location. Students spend the first half of the term studying the language and culture and the second half in service assignments. Other SST locations are China, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Germany and Indonesia.

Paraguayans organize historical society

FILADELFIA, Paraguay—After months of discussion, Paraguayan Mennonites have founded their own historical society. The Society for the History and Culture of the Mennonites in Paraguay was founded in December 1999. One goal of the new organization is to publish a Paraguayan Mennonite yearbook.—*Mennonite Historical Society Newsletter*

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Mennonite.net Webathon

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http://www.mennonite.net

Events

"Celebrate: Women Tell Their Stories" conference, April 15, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Sponsored by Bethel College Women's Association. Contact: 316-284-5334, rhpenner@bethelks.edu.

Michiana Anabaptist Historians spring meeting, April 1, Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. Speaker: Paton Yoder on bishop Joseph Yoder. Contact: 219-533-7819.

Rocky Mountain Conference annual meeting, May 5-7, Denver.

Gulf States Conference inspirational meeting, May 6-7, Duras, La.

Workers

Rempel, Amanda, on Feb. 20 was ordained for chaplain work at Kidron Bethel Retirement Village, North Newton, Kan.

Births

Adrian, Meagan Anne, Feb. 19, to Edwin and Sheila Adrian, Steinbach, Man.

Bottorff, Karl Regehr and Klaus Regehr (twins), Jan. 2, to Larry Bottorff and Kristine Regehr, Moundridge, Kan.

Brunk, Braden Daniel, Feb. 5, to Ben and Cynthia Brunk, Broadway, Va.

Crawford, Cody James, Feb. 21, to Danny and Michelle (Clark) Crawford, Wayland, Iowa.

Deckert, Andrew Carl Chappell, Feb. 26, to Aaron and Jennifer Chappell Deckert, Newton, Kan.

Godshall, Ella Cecile, Feb. 24, to Sara (Leichty) and Stephen Godshall, Mount Joy, Pa.

Kreider, Dalton Levi, Feb. 13, to Darrell and Tiffany Kreider, Lancaster, Pa.

Lam, Amanda Lois, Feb. 16, to Bette (Weaver) and Dorwon Lam, Mount Solon, Va.

Mason, Alexander Conrad, Feb. 22, to Brasos and DeAnn (Neuenschwander) Mason, Orrville, Ohio.

Newswanger, Danielle Cherise, Feb. 20, to Keith and Lori (Thomas) Newswanger, Willow Street, Pa.

Smucker, Anna Catherine, Feb. 23, to Beth (Hochstetler) and John Smucker, Goshen, Ind.

Thompson, Megan Renee, Feb. 21, to Amy and Rick Thompson, Baltimore.

Wenger, Benjamin Rein, Feb. 18, to Gordon and Sheri (Wenger) Wenger, Lancaster, Pa.

Marriages

Adams/Witmer: Kevin Adams, Lancaster, Pa., and Sharon Witmer, Lancaster, Feb. 19 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Berkey/Simmons: Adam Berkey, Harrisonburg, Va., and Gretchen Simmons, Harrisonburg, Feb. 5 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Graybill/Harnish: John Graybill, Lititz, Pa., and Elizabeth Harnish, Lititz, Jan. 8 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Mowery/Wachter: J. P. Mowery, Harrisonburg, Va., and Debbie Wachter, Blacksburg, Va., Feb. 12 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Base, William, 91, Pawnee Rock, Kan., died Feb. 26 of cancer. Spouse: Rose Marie Brazda Base (deceased). Parents: John and Kathern Schmidt Base (deceased). Survivors: children Sharon Reile, Patsy Payne; eight grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 28 at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock.

Cassel, Douglas, 62, Nappanee, Ind., died Feb. 21 of an aneurysm. Spouse: Glenwyn Cassel. Other survivors: son Scott; two grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 25 at Nappanee.

Chupp, Ada Yoder, 92, Nappanee, Ind., died Feb. 18. Survivors: children Merl, Caryle, Wayne, Shirley Glenn; nine grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 21 at Nappanee.

Derstine, John, 60, Norristown, Pa., died Feb. 25. Parents: Norman and Lizzie Derstine. Funeral: Feb. 29 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Epp, Abel, 75, McAllen, Texas, died Feb. 24 of a heart attack. Spouse: Dorothy Epp. Parents: Gerhard and Katherine Epp (deceased). Other survivors: children Ramona Stage, Rochelle Bain, Janelle Hamm; six grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 28 at McAllen.

High, Elvin, 79, Lititz, Pa., died Feb. 12 of cancer. Spouse: Ella High. Other survivors: children Cerwin, Elvin Jr., Velda Rhoads, Doris Stauffer; 14 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 16 at Erb Mennonite Church, Manheim, Pa.

Hostetler, Anna Pearl Longacre, 73, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 18 of leiomyosarcoma. Spouse: David Hostetler. Parents: Horace and Anna Longacre (deceased). Other survivors: children Linda Kulp, Keith; two grandchildren; Funeral: Feb. 21 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Klassen, Helena Petkau, 92, Steinbach, Man., died Feb. 12. Spouse: Abram Klassen (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 16 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Leatherman, Pearl Alderfer, 91, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 19. Spouse: Roosevelt Leatherman (deceased). Parents: Horace and Bertha Keller Alderfer (deceased). Survivors: son Alton; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 23 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Long, Laura Smith, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 20 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Clayton Long (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Annie Smith (deceased). Survivors: children Janice Morris, Jay, Donald; eight grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 26 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Petersheim, Raymond, 34, Hutchinson, Kan., died Feb. 27 of cancer. Spouse: Judy Kennell Petersheim. Parents: Chris and Ada Keim Petersheim. Other survivor: son Travis. Funeral: March 1 at Yoder Mennonite Church, Haven, Kan.

Schmidt, Otto Nick, 67, Buhler, Kan., died Feb. 26. Spouse: Nancy Ratzlaff Schmidt. Parents: Nickolai (deceased) and Susan Unruh Schmidt. Other survivors: children Nickolai, Dobby, Jody Ratzlaff, Shelly Loganbill, Kelly Pankratz; 13 grandchildren. Memorial service: March 1 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Shelly, Kathryn, 92, Bristol, Pa., died Feb. 24 of Alzheimer's disease. Parents: Elwood and Katie Rickert Shelly. Survivors: children Andrew, Margaret Weaver. Memorial service: March 5 at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.

Smith, Peter, 71, Lansdale, Pa., died Feb. 23. Spouse: June Smith. Other survivors: children Ginger Swintosky, Newton; two grandchildren. Memorial service: March 5 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale.

Wiebe, Susanna Kroeker, 88, Steinbach, Man., died Feb. 13. Spouse: Isaak Wiebe (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 17 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

Wilcox, Clyde, 78, Nottanwa, Mich., died Feb. 23 of emphysema. Spouse: Katherine Stauffer Wilcox (deceased). Parents: Clyde and Viola Carlisle Wilcox (deceased). Survivors: children James, Loretta Stevens Eicher, Judy Doney, Edward; 18 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 27 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Burr Oak, Mich.

Wyse, Ada Freyenberger, 93, Wayland, Iowa, died Feb. 24. Spouse: Ivan Wyse (deceased). Parents: Menno and Mary Oswald Freyenberger (deceased). Survivors: children Miriam Gowey, Verena Jacobs; six grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 28 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Yoder, Ida, 94, Wadsworth, Ohio, died Feb. 26. Parents: Mahlon and Mary Yoder (deceased). Funeral: March 1 at Summit Mennonite Church, Barberton, Ohio.

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- **Called to ministry?** Swamp Mennonite Church in rural southeastern Pennsylvania, one hour north of Philadelphia, seeking full-time ***associate pastor of youth ministries***. Utilize your gifts in our Anabaptist community.

  Send resume to Swamp Mennonite Church, attn. Search Committee, 2125 Rosedale Road, Quakertown, PA 18951; email swamppb@fast.net

- **Kraybill Mennonite School**, Mount Joy, Pa., is accepting applications for the following teaching positions: ***kindergarten*** (full- or part-time), ***grade 2*** and ***6th grade language/math***. Applicants contact John Weber, Administrator, 598 Kraybill Church Road, Mount Joy, PA 17552; 717-653-5236; fax 717-653-7334.

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a ***coordinator of Christian education***, part-time (26 hours/week). Organizational, creative, self-starting, teaching and relational skills desired. Position is immediately available. Contact Ken Bontreger, Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Silverwood Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate minister*** with emphasis on youth and young adult ministries. Organizational skills, a heart for youth, some experience in youth ministries, and bachelor's degree desired. Position is available immediately.

  Contact Silverwood Mennonite Church, 1712 W. Clinton St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-533-1922.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks full-time ***Spanish teacher*** to begin as soon as possible. Contact Barbara Moses, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; 215-769-5363.

- **Crown Hill Mennonite Church**, Rittman, Ohio, owns a 17-unit apartment building known as Crown Hill Manor, and is seeking mature Christian couple willing to serve God as ***resident managers***. Applicants to have building and lawn maintenance skills and should be able to relate well with people. Approximately 80 hrs/month, time off negotiable. Apartment with utilities is provided.

  Contact Floyd Fawcett, 7516 Zigler Road, Sterling, OH 44276; 330-939-2141.

- **Carman Mennonite Church** invites applications for a full-time ***pastor***. Active membership 127; attendance Sunday a.m. 150. Degree from Anabaptist-Mennonite seminary (college) preferred. Carman has a population of 2,700 and is one hour southwest of Winnipeg.

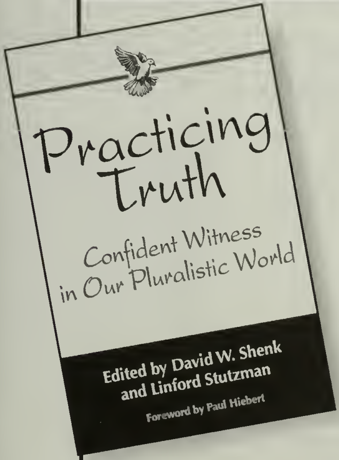
  Send resumes and inquiries to Ed Klassen, Search Committee chair, Box 549, Carman, MB R0G 0B0; 204-745-2736; fax 204-745-2762; email tempo829@mb.sympatico.ca

- **Southfield Village**, a new continuing care retirement community in South Bend, Ind., seeks an ***executive director*** to develop and manage the 25-acre campus. The organization's 14-member nonprofit board consists of representatives from eight area denominations and has a mission to provide senior services "in the spirit of the reconciling and healing example of Jesus Christ." Construction for Phase 1, including 60 health-care beds and 64 assisted living apartments, is already in progress and scheduled to open in fall 2000. The Master Plan calls for expansion across the continuum beginning with pre-sales of independent garden-style apartments in January 2000.

  Qualified candidates must be a licensed nursing home administrator, have significant senior health-care/housing experience, be able to work effectively with a board of directors, use a collaborative approach to decision making, and bring an entrepreneurial spirit to the work environment. Southfield Village is sponsored by Mennonite Health Services and managed by Greencroft Inc.

  Please send resume to: Kirk Stiffney, Greencroft Inc., P.O. Box 819, Goshen, IN 46527-0819; email Kstiffney@cs.com

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.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Confident Witness in Our Pluralistic World
Edited by David W. Shenk and Linford Stutzman
Foreword by Paul Hiebert

Confident Witness in Our Pluralistic World

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- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** is looking for teachers of ***English, mathematics, science, technology and library science, languages, physical education, art and music*** who have experience working with minority students in an urban setting.

For more information, write to Mrs. Barbara Moses, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a candidate for the position of full-time ***youth pastor***. Currently Franconia has over 100 jr. & sr. high youth involved in its exciting and growing program. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth.

Interested people should send a resume to: Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email info@franconiamennonite.org

- **Locust Grove Mennonite Church** offers challenging full-time vocation in south central Michigan for ***seasoned pastor***. He will have Anabaptist convictions, gifts of preaching, coordinating, teaching for mission in growing rural congregation (ca. 150) with agricultural, business, educational, nursing occupations.

Contact Chair, Search Committee, 63435 Borgert Rd., Sturgis, MI 49091; 616-659-5916; email dsommers@net-link.net

- **Choice Books Central Office** seeks ***accountant-information systems administrator***. Responsibilities: manage central office accounting system; train/support CB Distributor accounting staff; develop/support local area networks; financial budgeting/planning. Qualifications: accounting/computer systems experience; technical, organizational skills; database management experience. Education: accounting/computer information degree.

Please submit resume to John Bomberger, Choice Books, 2387 Grace Chapel Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801; fax 540-434-9894; email bombergerj@choicebooks.org

- **Eastern Mennonite High School,** 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, seeks a full-time ***physical, health and driver education*** teacher for grades 6-12. Applicant shall demonstrate effective teaching skills, integration of faith into the classroom, with a commitment to the Mennonite Church Confession of Faith.

Fax resumes to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528. Application processing will begin April 1.

- **Herald Press** seeks applicants for ***trade publishing book editor***. Plans, acquires and develops book manuscripts in assigned subject areas to carry out an international Anabaptist-Mennonite book publishing program, releasing 20 to 25 titles a year. Begins summer of 2000.

Send inquiry or application with resume to Awanda Pritts, Human Resources, Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683; email Apritts@mph.org

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center,** a multiracial, inner-city elementary school, has teaching positions available. We are in search of a classroom teacher for ***5th/6th grade*** and an ***art/music*** teacher. These are full-time voluntary service positions. Housing, health insurance and stipend provided. Ten-month contract begins Aug. 14, 2000.

For more information or to request applications materials, contact Marv Friesen, Principal, CMLC, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **La Casa de Maria y Marta** seeks applicants for ***director***. This San Antonio Mennonite Church ministry provides opportunities for groups to serve in the city while learning about realities in San Antonio and South Texas. Responsibilities include developing and directing service and learning programs for youth and adults and coordinating cross-cultural seminars for college students. Full-time, salaried position, housing provided. Spanish helpful but not required.

For information and an application, contact John Lichty, 210-533-7181; emilyjohn@juno.com or lacasa602@aol.com

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as we seek our future together as God's transformed people in Mennonite Church USA. All are welcome.

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- fellowship across traditional MC/GC lines
- hear a sermon on "making all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

29 churchwide gatherings are planned throughout the United States, March-June 2000. Join the celebration for the church God is forming among us!

April 2, Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA. Speaker–Jonathan Larson
April 2, Norristown New Life Mennonite Church, Norristown, PA. Speaker–Michael Banks
April 2, Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, PA. Speaker–Bernie Wiebe
April 2, Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, D.C. Speaker–June Alliman Yoder
April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA. Speaker–John C. Murray
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN. Speaker–Diane Zaerr
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL. Speaker–Janeen Bertsche Johnson

For more information contact Shelley Buller 316-283-5100 ext. 249
or e-mail ShelleyB@gcmc.org

March 5, First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS.
March 12, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, PA.
March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA.
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson. NB.
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN.
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX.
March 26, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN.

April 2, Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA.
April 2, Norristown New Life Mennonite Church, Norristown, PA.
April 2, Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, PA.
April 2, Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, D.C.
April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA.
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN.
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL.
April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FD.
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK.
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA.

May 5-7, First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO. (RMMC annual sessions)
May 7, First Mennonite Church, Morton, IL.
May 7, Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH.
May 14, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, OH.
May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA.
May 21, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA.

June 4, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD.
June 8-11, Casselton Mennonite Church, Casselton, ND. (NCC annual sessions)
June 11, Community Mennonite Fellowship, Corning, NY.
June 22-23, Moses Lake High School, Moses Lake, WA. (PNMC annual sessions)
June 24, First Mennonite, Reedley, CA. (PSMC annual sessions)

Resolutions for a new century

by Atlee Yoder

As my family steps into a new century, I have searched my soul for evidence of a life completely submitted to our Savior, Jesus Christ. Unless I take frequent inventory, the sheer pace of life draws me away from the spiritual priorities I desire to maintain. My family cannot afford to have a father and husband whose heart is divided in loyalty.

We hear today that a parent should provide for the financial needs of children, and it is good to spend some time with them when scheduling permits. Children should have a luxurious house to grow up in. A "home" is not necessary, but every child should have his or her own bedroom, TV, CD and DVD player, computer with Internet access, fridge, microwave and bathroom. We are told financial needs include an allowance for the latest in name-brand clothes, entertainment and junk food. Children should be enrolled in as many activities as possible. Attendance at these activities, and all the transportation required, will provide opportunities to be close to your child as you drive and observe their participation.

If the church has guidance, will anyone have the time to listen? All our precious seconds seem to be taken up by our precious "seconds": second homes, second cars, second TVs, second computers, second phone lines, second bank accounts, second mortgages, second jobs, second credit cards. Everyone has seconds, and many are working on thirds.

The church has been pushed from the center of our lives to the fringes. No longer are we committed to a body of believers. We show up at the church that we can get the most out of with the least amount of effort. When the shiny new model with the latest programs comes out, we jump ship. The church becomes a rapidly changing, program-driven accessory to supplement our individualism and materialism. A lack of emphasis on relationship building leaves a sterile environment where perception is viewed as reality. The model for this is the media church: profitable, political, prestigious and powerful.

Profound implications: Jesus said, "You cannot serve God and money." The unprecedented wealth in America today presents the church with many problems. More wealth has been generated in the last century in the United States than in the entire world throughout history. This has profound implications:

1. Christianity in America embraces this wealth to gain power, political clout and prestige. If there is a difference between the church and the corporate world, it is barely visible.

2. Sociocultural values have permeated the church's center, crumbling core beliefs or at least diluting them. Morality is seen as subjective, loving one's neighbor as inconvenient.

3. We have created a faceless society in which relationships, commitment and accountability seem outdated. People are disposable, as we feed on individualism.

Three standards: I need to tell myself and fellow believers that I will not follow blindly down this dead-end path. I will test everything by three standards Jesus raised by his example.

1. God's Son came of lowly birth to two ordinary people. No power or prestige here but God choosing to ignore earthly kingdoms and wealth. Before Jesus began his ministry he was tempted by power and prestige, which he rejected. Throughout his ministry, Jesus ignored the potential for power and prestige, even dashing hopes for them before they could originate. Jesus touched the unclean, ate with the despised, healed the brokenhearted and loved the unlovely. This new year I will look to accept and encourage the powerless and disreputable around me, regardless of the social or economic cost.

2. Jesus simplified and magnified God's law for us. God's laws are to be lived, not just kept. Love your neighbors by doing only what is best for their health and well-being. Treat them with dignity. Live a life of integrity and fair-mindedness. Get to know God through prayer, listening, looking for who God is in the Bible, history, creation and in the lives of those around us. Love God and desire the treasures of heaven. This year I will live the laws Jesus taught and do what following Christ requires of me, regardless of convenience.

3. Jesus showed us the importance of people. He built close relationships with his followers. He gave them unconditional love but required accountability. Jesus took time to address the needs of the individual, not just the crowd. He welcomed even children into his demanding schedule, while at times he turned away from the crowds. Jesus met people where they were, ministering to their immediate needs while showing their deeper urgency. He demonstrated that through our love for each other we show our love for God. He showed us the ultimate love through his death. This year I will put people first. People will come before my other commitments. I will strive to be compassionate regardless of the time it takes.

The church has been pushed from the center of our lives to the fringes. No longer are we committed to a body of believers. We show up at the church that we can get the most out of with the least amount of effort.

Atlee Yoder is a member of Kalona (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

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Rich Preheim

Little questions from the "Peanuts" gallery

There it was last month in full-color glory. Prominently displayed in the Feb. 20 Sunday newspaper comics was the Word of God. But that prominence also underscored the void that will be left by the death of Charles M. Schulz.

Schulz, of course, was the genius behind the "Peanuts" comic strip who died Feb. 12 of colon cancer. While he has passed on, newspapers around the world are reprinting—for the time being—some of his classic strips.

On Feb. 20, Schulz's pulpit in print showed Lucy annoyed by Linus' sighing as he sits nearby with his blanket sucking his thumb. When she orders her theologically inclined brother to stop sighing, he invokes Romans 8:26 to justify his actions: "Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words." That leaves Lucy muttering to herself, "I'm either going to have to slug him or start going back to Sunday school."

What an amazing occurrence in the current cultural climate: Schulz could put Scripture at the top of a page in a secular newspaper and in front of millions of people around the globe. At the same time, battles are raging over prayer in schools and posting the Ten Commandments in courtrooms. When facing life's problems, some believers adamantly proclaim clear-cut solutions; Schulz was content to pose inquiries in faith and trust in the results.

"Peanuts" subtly showed the need for God's love and grace and the salvation of Jesus Christ to redeem us from the kite-eating trees of our lives.

Not that all of his comic strips had baldly religious content. In fact, the power of Schulz's incorporation of Christianity was enhanced by the fact that he didn't do it all the time. "Peanuts," however, was about asking questions, about trying to make sense out of life's failures, frailties and foibles: Charlie Brown's inability to kick a football, Lucy's unrequited love for Schroeder, Peppermint Patty's D-minuses on her homework, Snoopy's fantasy world of flying aces and best-selling writers.

Even without putting them into an obviously religious framework, those can also be religious issues—about who we are and what we do. Schulz, who was active in the Church of God (Anderson), once said his approach to teaching Sunday school was to "create a climate in which people … ask even little questions." So it also was with "Peanuts."

Consider Linus in the sandbox shaping a magnificent metropolis, only to have it promptly washed away by a sudden downpour. "There's a lesson to be learned here somewhere," he observes, "but I don't know what it is."

Linus' puzzlement over his failure at city planning is one of Schulz's little questions, but one with great implications. For Christians, the connection to Christ's parable of the wise and foolish housebuilders is apparent. For those not familiar with biblical teachings, the strip is a simple entree into contemplation of fundamental issues of life's meaning and mission.

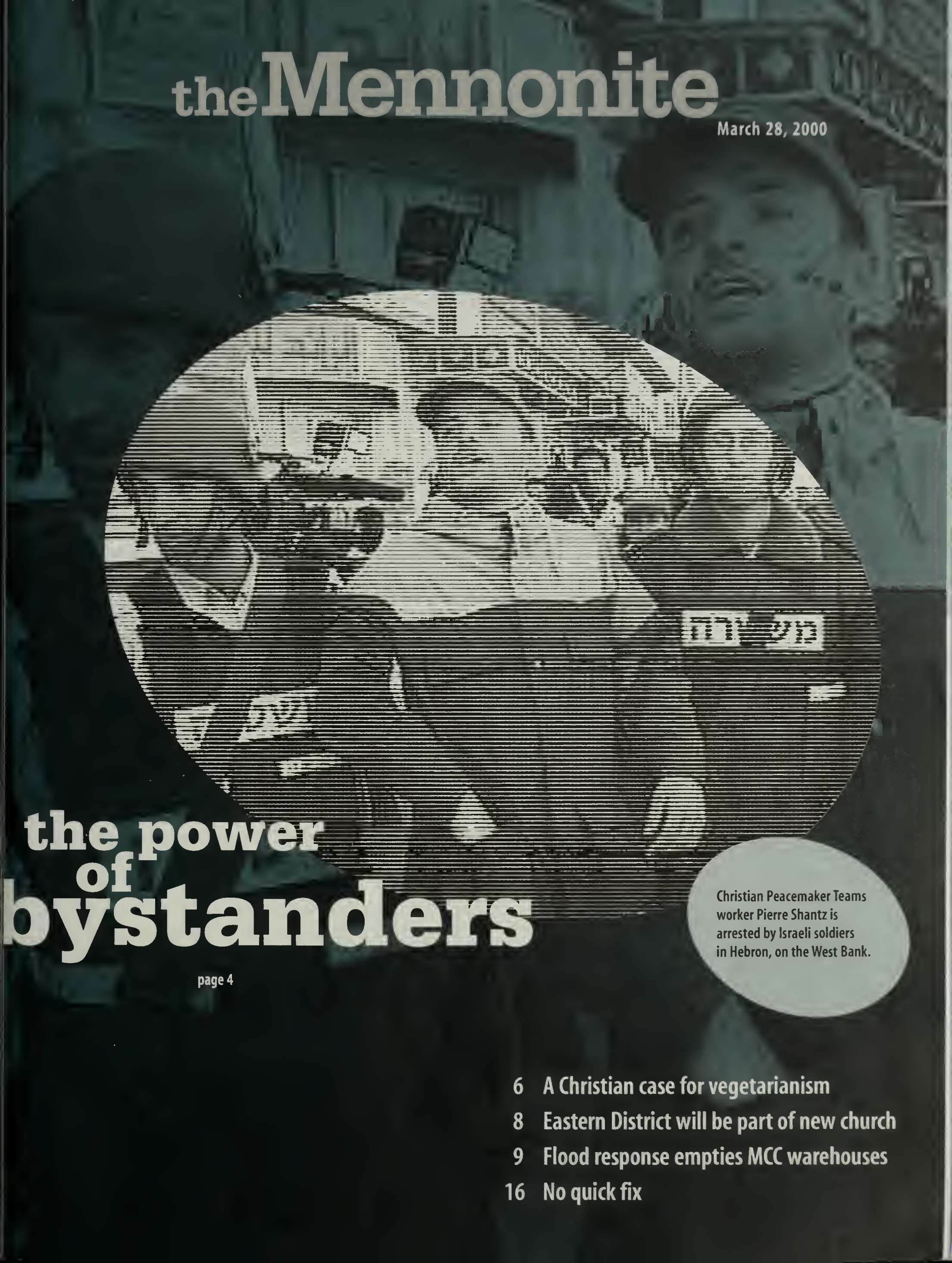
Schulz, however, did not offer pat explanations for what plagues us. The issues are much too complex for that. But "Peanuts" started the discernment process. "Our concern will not be so much in trying to say what Mr. Schulz has actually put into his cartoons," writes Robert L. Short in his best-selling *The Gospel According to Peanuts*, "as in saying what has come out of his cartoons to us."

"Peanuts" encouraged us in our struggles. Like Charlie Brown, our kites become snared in trees. Like Linus, we crave our security blankets. Like Lucy, we become fussbudgets. Like Snoopy, we are unable to triumph over the Red Baron. We keep trying, and we keep failing. But then, for those who have eyes to see and ears to hear, "Peanuts" subtly showed the need for God's love and grace and the salvation of Jesus Christ to redeem us from the kite-eating trees of our lives.

On the surface, "Peanuts" wasn't about Christian faith but rather about the universal questions that loom over us all. That's why Schulz's creation over the last four decades became the world's most beloved comic strip. But through it, by asking those universal questions, he created a vehicle for God and the Holy Spirit to lead people to search for answers. And that is why Schulz will be missed.—*rp*

the Mennonite

March 28, 2000



the power of bystanders

page 4

Christian Peacemaker Teams worker Pierre Shantz is arrested by Israeli soldiers in Hebron, on the West Bank.

6 A Christian case for vegetarianism
8 Eastern District will be part of new church
9 Flood response empties MCC warehouses
16 No quick fix

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Mennonite college mission

In the next month, many high school seniors must decide where they will attend college next fall. In my work as associate dean at Goshen (Ind.) College, I talk with many 17- and 18-year-olds in our churches who struggle with the college choice decision. I believe that pastors, parents and other adults must take a more active role in helping our young people understand the wider and deeper implications involved in choosing an alma mater (Latin for "mother of my soul").

Many factors clamor for attention as we wrestle with the college choice decision. But we often overlook one important factor in the selection process: the college's mission statement and general education program (or liberal arts core). Does the college's mission statement match your deepest values and aspirations? Is it evident in the programs and people that you encounter when you visit the campus? Is it evident in the graduates of the college? Colleges can have a profound effect on their graduates, giving them identity and purpose in life. But which identity? Which purpose?

Mennonite colleges have strong mission statements and are outstanding in other qualities as well. Just how outstanding became apparent to me in a new way at a national conference I attended in February. Thousands of college and university personnel gathered from across the continent to learn how to help students succeed in college. Key concepts were repeated: hospitality, community, service, multicultural respect and academic advising that affirms unique God-given strengths in each student. Our Mennonite colleges have excelled in these qualities for many years. Other colleges and universities are striving to add what we have emphasized for a long time.

Our church colleges are not perfect (no colleges and no churches are), but they are fine colleges that deserve our informed and gracious advocacy. Our young people deserve nothing less.—*Becky Horst, Goshen, Ind.*

Oil is well that ends well?

Recently we have received several emails requesting that we support a boycott of gasoline stations for several days in early April to protest and hopefully halt the increasing high fuel costs. We agree that there is likely a certain amount of unfair price gouging on the part of oil companies. However, even though we dislike the increased costs, we will not support such a boycott for the following reasons:

1. Higher fuel costs permit more pumping of oil from less productive wells in the United States that stop pumping when fuel costs drop because it is not economically feasible to use those wells. Utilizing the less productive wells provides increased employment and business.
2. Low-cost fuel encourages greater pollution because we all tend to travel more.
3. Higher oil costs provide incentives for the exploration and development of other sources of fuel such as solar power and cleaner burning propane.
4. Higher fuel costs provide great incentives to develop more accessible mass public and cargo transportation, especially rail services. Europe and Japan have had much higher fuel costs for many years and have excellent public transportation services.

We do not like the increase in fuel costs, but we believe it is a necessary corrective and that fuel costs may need to increase even more to help us all make the kind of needed changes in our personal lives and our country.—*Paul and Miriam Burkholder, Belle Glade, Fla.*

On abortion and racism

I find David H. Clymer (Readers Say, March 7) does a disservice by equating abortion with racism. To call a pro-choice belief racist, and by inference an anti-abortion belief anti-racist, is stretching reality very thin. Perhaps if we were to look at why nonwhite children have a much harder time being adopted, or why black women often receive less societal support for carrying a pregnancy to term or raise children under difficult circumstances, we might begin to appreciate the true legacy that racism has in relation to the abortion issue.—*Joseph Miller, Southeastern, Pa.*

Bogs of religiosity

Jesus' story of the soils (Mark 4:1-20) has intrigued me for years. A preacher could preach a different sermon every week for a long time without exhausting the truths therein. There is a type of soil that Jesus did not mention: the bogs of religiosity. Here the seed grows but is stunted by its own strength. What should be its impetus for strength has become its problem. It is amazing how the church grew in Acts. Satisfaction with a small church is religious arrogance. If Mennonites had saved just half of our own, we today would be more than a little-known, small group which people of the community are still not sure if they are welcome to attend.

theMennonite

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y readers say

I have a simplistic yet profound solution: "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields." Let's break the circle of wagons and assume some responsibility for the communities in which we live. I believe that if we just tithed our time, talent and resources to the community, we would not have time for all the internal problems and splits which have littered our pathway.—*D. Lowell Nissley, Sarasota, Fla.*

Free from works

We are too prone to see ourselves as Mennonites by our actions and deeds. If we are born again, our obedience to faith should produce works. But if we pride ourselves in our works, such as our peace efforts, Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Disaster Service and meat canning, they can become filthy rags and nullify our faith in Jesus. The good, moral people of our communities who do good stuff have never led anyone to the Lord. Neither will our Mennonite churches until we introduce our friends and neighbors to Jesus Christ as Savior.

I hope Mennonite churches could put up signs in huge letters beside our interstate highways saying: "Do you want to be a Christian? Meet Jesus. Next exit, right one block." Then in our discipleship classes we can teach new believers obedience in love, service, peace and social justice.

In 50 years of my ministry, I never met anyone who became a Christian by saying, "I want to be a peacemaker and servant." But I have assisted hundreds of people who confessed their sins and accepted Jesus as their Savior and learned to be peacemakers and servants through follow-up discipleship. If the Mennonite Church is to grow in the next decades, we have to get our message in line with the salvation Scriptures in the Bible.—*Sanford C. Oyer, Wooster, Ohio*

Cover photo by
Christian Peacemaker Teams

The power of bystanders

by Julie Hart

Whether in France, the West Bank, North Carolina or Kansas, conflicts involve three important players. We are most familiar with offenders and victims. But we often omit the important role of bystanders, the third party in all conflicts. They hold incredible power. How they use that power often tips the scale toward either transformation of the oppressor or further violence against the oppressed.

Decades of social psychological research tell us that bystanders to a violent situation regularly engage in denial of what is happening. They rationalize heinous behaviors they hear about and practice what's called motivated misperception. This allows bystanders to see what they want to see and hear what they want to see and hear. They are usually blissfully unaware that systematic discrimination and harm are occurring under their noses.

This was true of many German citizens—even Christians—during the Nazis' systematic oppression and genocide of Jews, and it is true today in the West Bank, where Israel occupies Palestinian territory. The majority of Israeli citizens are blissfully unaware of the housing demolitions, land confiscations, tortuous political detentions and human rights violations committed with the full support of their military against Palestinians.

We all have the ability to tune out information that does not correspond with our scheme of things. We regularly fill in the gaps in information with facts that look good for our group and bad for our enemies. We perceive identical acts carried out by our friends and our enemies in a different light. This denial and misperception results in silence of the masses.

This selective perception and silence of the masses may be overcome by bystanders in three ways: (1) define the situation differently, (2) resist the existing plan and (3) organize public protests.

Define the situation differently: Bystanders help define the meaning of an event or behavior for others around them and thus have the power to move others toward either empathy or indifference. People caught in ambiguous or new situations, such as robbery or street violence, are looking for clues to understand what is happening and how to respond.

A few years ago, as I entered my local grocery store on a quiet summer evening, I encountered three adolescent boys. One sat on his bicycle while another boy hit him with a short metal pipe. The third boy egged on the aggressor. The boy on the bike bent over to shield himself from the blows while also taunting the aggressor.

It would have been easy to ignore this ugly, tense situation, figuring it was innocent boys at play and would work itself out. But my Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) violence-reduction training—or perhaps the Holy Spirit—took over. Without thinking, I stood between the boy on the bike and the pipe-wielding aggressor. The only thing I knew to say was, "This is not OK; hitting is not an option."

The aggressor's response was vicious: "Get out of my way. This is none of your business."

He raised his pipe to threaten me, and despite my fear, I said again, "This is not OK; hitting is not an option."

Our standoff continued for several tense minutes. Even the boy on the bike told me to leave, but I continued to speak my definition of the situation: "This is not OK; hitting is not an option."

By the grace of God, an employee of the store walked by and asked if I needed help. I said yes, and she scurried inside and soon returned with the store manager and an assistant. The manager warned the boys, "Stop it right now, or I'll call the police."

Soon one boy took off on his bike, and the other two headed in the opposite direction. My CPT training had paid off, right in my own town. I had helped redefine the situation as not OK, and it had caught the attention of another bystander, who mobilized additional help. Denial, selective perception and silence in the face of violence did not rule the day.

Resist the existing plan: Bystanders can withdraw their consent from an existing plan of oppression. This can be done through breaking the silence, organizing opposition or getting in the way of unjust laws or policies.

In the French village of Le Chambon during World War II, Christian bystanders chose to get in the way of violence. Most of the vil-

Bystanders can withdraw their consent from an existing plan of oppression through breaking the silence, organizing opposition or getting in the way of unjust laws or policies.

Resources

- *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence* by Ervin Staub (Cambridge University Press, 1989)
- *Protest, Power and Change: An Encyclopedia of Nonviolent Action* (Garland, 1997)

CPT worker Sydney Stigge-Kaufman (in hat) stands with Palestinian protesters in Hebron, the West Bank.

Bystanders to a conflict have the power to tip the scales toward either transformation of the oppressor or further violence against the oppressed.

lagers were Huguenots, French Protestants, who were led by their pastor, Andre Trocme. At great risk, Trocme built a network of people and neighboring villages that sheltered Jews in homes and on farms. The resistance began with a few small steps, such as a refusal to salute the Nazi flag. Then Trocme refused to sign an oath of loyalty to the invading government. These steps inspired the youth of the village to protest further.

The Trocmes were the first to shelter a Jewish German woman fleeing her country. She had heard there might be help in the village and knocked on the Trocmes' door. Inviting her in seemed the natural thing to do. Word spread, and other villagers followed suit, eventually finding refuge for 5,000 Jews, many of them children escaping the Holocaust.

By redefining the Nazi Final Solution as evil and resisting German mandates, more than two-thirds of the Jews in France survived the Holocaust, largely by hiding. In Belgium, more than half survived in hiding. In Italy, more than 80 percent survived in hiding with the support of local bystanders.

Organize public protest: Bystanders can organize public protest to unjust laws in order to mobilize silent bystanders to resistance and action.

Bystanders played a significant role during desegregation of the U.S. South. In an effort to test a Supreme Court decision banning segregation in bus station restaurants and bathrooms, interracial teams of civil rights activists rode public buses throughout the South during 1961 to try to integrate the terminals. These were often students from the North who had little to gain personally but much to lose in their efforts.

Initially the work was uneventful, but when the bus riders came to South Carolina, white mobs attacked buses and their riders, beating them severely and preventing their progress. The courage of the bus riders to persevere despite attacks, the consciousness-raising this created among other bystanders, the nationwide media attention and the government response eventually combined to bring federal laws supporting the promised desegregation of terminals by the end of 1961.

CPT is providing well-organized public protest around the globe. In a portion of Hebron, the West Bank, which the Israeli military has occupied since 1967, the military provides civil and criminal government and laws. Local Palestinians suffering under those laws often organize nonviolent protests. Last year, hundreds of Palestinians gathered to march through the streets of Hebron to protest the continued Israeli occupation. Despite the peace accords, in which Israel agreed to withdraw, soldiers remained in the city.

As the nonviolent, well-disciplined Palestinian protesters neared the dividing line between the Palestinian- and Israeli-controlled areas of the city, the Israeli Army commander monitoring the protest ordered the troops to prepare to fire. He gave no warning to the marchers, who were boxed in a narrow street with nowhere to flee flying bullets.

Sara Reschly, a full-time CPT worker and one of five bystander-observers of the march, saw the bloodbath coming. She could have resigned herself and stepped aside. She could have convinced herself the troops were just posturing. She could have seen the shooting as a necessary warning to control the marchers.

Instead, Sara, only 28, with her whole life before her, stepped out in front of the soldiers. With her arms in the air and a voice from her gut she yelled, "Stop! This is a nonviolent protest." With that simple but powerful message she did three things: redefined the situation, blocked the soldiers from firing their weapons and registered her sincere protest.

By the grace of God, she got the attention of the army commander and prevented a bloodbath. She distracted the soldiers from shooting, and the commander halted his plan in order to remove Sara via arrest. As soon as the Palestinian protesters realized the danger they were in, their leaders had them fall to the ground in prayer, as Muslims commonly do.

The symbolism of hundreds of bodies prostrate on the ground facing a group of well-armed soldiers is enough to shake most people's definition of a situation, and it did. The march and the soldiers eventually disbanded peacefully, returning to their respective areas of the city. The event garnered significant international media attention as well as providing a great illustration of the power of a single, well-trained bystander to transform a potentially lethal situation.

This is what CPT is about—training Christians who are neither offenders nor victims in a conflict. It is about calling attention to and transforming injustice nonviolently. It is about saving lives, not by returning evil for evil but returning evil with good.

Sara Reschly (above), only 28, stepped out in front of the soldiers. With her arms in the air and a voice from her gut she yelled, "Stop! This is a nonviolent protest."

Julie Hart teaches sociology at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. This article is adapted from a talk she gave Feb. 19 in North Newton, Kan., to CPT supporters. For more information on CPT contact <cpt@igc.apc.org>.

The peaceable kingdom at hand

A Christian case for vegetarianism

by John Zimmerman

We await the coming of God's kingdom in all its fullness, but we can participate in it now by living under the mercy God offers through Jesus and sharing that mercy with others. To the extent we seek to live now, on this side of Christ's return, according to the ways that will one day characterize his eternal reign completely, we experience and witness to God's kingdom. I believe that being vegetarian is one of the ways we can do that.

If the future kingdom of God involves a return to the way things were in Eden regarding diet (as in Isaiah 11), and we are called to live now in this world according to the ways of God's coming kingdom, then it would be good for vegetarianism to be a part of Christian living now.

God's good past and good future: Meat eating seems to be something God did not intend for creation but allowed only after humanity's fall into sin. At the end of the creation story in Genesis 1, God tells the people, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food" (1:29). Although human beings are told to "rule" over the animals, they are told to eat only plants. In fact, it seems that before the fall, animals did not even eat each other, for God is recorded as saying to all the animals of the earth, "I give every green plant for food" (1:30). When God declared creation "good," according to the Genesis account, it was an explicitly vegetarian creation.

Humans are recorded as meat eaters only after humanity's fall into sin distorted the good world God had made. After the flood, God is recorded as explicitly blessing the eating of meat for the first time, telling Noah, "Everything that lives and moves will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything" (9:3). But this is part of the aftermath of the Fall.

Just as Scripture describes a vegetarian diet in the good creation of the past, the same is true in the biblical description of the restored creation of the eternal future.

Mennonites are familiar with and fond of the description of the coming kingdom of the Messiah in Isaiah: "The wolf will lie with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox" (11:6-7). That vision of a restored Eden requires that predators stop devouring prey. In the animal kingdom, we human beings are decidedly among the predators who must change our behavior for the peaceable kingdom to become more of a reality.

So if the future kingdom of God, as prophesied, involves a return to the way things were in Eden regarding diet (as envisioned in Isaiah 11), and we are called to live now in this world according to the ways of God's coming kingdom (as is clear from the teachings of Jesus), then it would be good for vegetarianism to be a part of Christian living now.

A moral case: Moral reasoning supports that conclusion. Animals are capable of suffering. Their responses to pain are similar to human responses: They cry out, they tend to their wounds, they shy away from the source of their pain. There are many differences between humans and other animals, but one similarity is that both we and they feel pain and experience suffering.

The lives and welfare of animals have value to God. Among the many biblical passages that make this clear is the end of Jonah, in which God explains giving Nineveh a chance to repent on the grounds that "Nineveh has more than 120,000 people … and many cattle as well" (4:11).

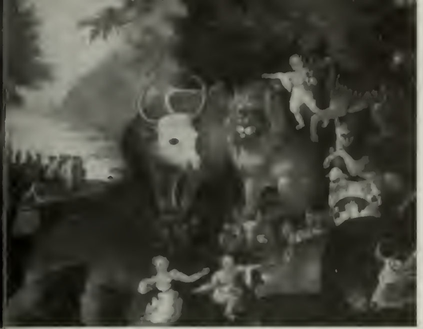
Jesus notes that God is attentive to the life and death of every sparrow (Matthew 10:29). And he approvingly cites the permission the Pharisees gave for people to break the Sabbath in order to help an animal (Matthew 12:11-12). One of his most powerful ways of expressing God's love for people was to describe it as being like a dedicated shepherd who searches without rest for one lost sheep (Matthew 18:12-14).

Because animals can suffer and because their lives and welfare have value, most of us will agree that it is wrong to cause them suffering or take their lives without a good enough reason.

What is a good enough reason? Most of us might agree that to save a human being is a good enough reason. For example, if a vicious dog seems about to attack a child, shooting the dog is justifiable.

On the other side, most of us might agree that mere pleasure is not a good enough reason. Few attempt to justify killing animals for the sheer fun of it.

Yet that's why we eat meat: because we find the experience pleasurable. Human beings do not need to eat animal flesh in order to be healthy. We know enough about nutrition for people to be able to receive all the nutrients their bodies need from food other than meat (plus a couple nutritional supplements that aren't made from the bodies of animals). We eat meat because we like the way it tastes, but,



Edward Hicks' painting "The Peaceable Kingdom"

nutritionally, eating meat is optional. The only reason we do it is because of the pleasure we get from it, and so every bit of meat we eat is from an animal slaughtered for our pleasure. The blood is on our hands whether we shed it ourselves or pay someone else to do it.

What I'm not saying: I want to emphasize, because this point is often misunderstood, that I'm making no assertion that animals should be treated the same as human beings. Human beings and animals are different in important ways. For example, I'm not claiming that we should open the public schools to pigs. I know of no reason to believe that pigs can be taught to read or write. But they are like us in their ability to suffer and in that their lives and welfare have value.

Responses to common objections: Three common Christian arguments against vegetarianism are (1) animals may be eaten because they, as opposed to humans, aren't created in the image of God, (2) nowhere does the post-flood biblical witness frown upon the eating of animals, and (3) Jesus himself ate animals.

As to the argument that we may eat animals because they, as opposed to humans, aren't created in the image of God, I've already mentioned some of the many biblical statements that put value on the welfare of animals. That Scripture doesn't present animals as created in the image of God is a good reason to decide to not recognize animals as members of the church (Francis of Assisi's alleged preaching to birds notwithstanding). It doesn't give us free reign to destroy them simply because doing so gives us pleasure.

The point that Scripture (after it describes the flood) does not seem to frown upon eating animals and that, in fact, Jesus himself ate meat, is stronger. I've already noted that the description of the peaceable kingdom in Isaiah 11 seems to hint that meat eating is an evil the Messiah will eventually remove from creation. However, the fact remains that Jesus ate meat without recorded hesitation. For that reason I'm less than certain that God's will is for Christians to be vegetarians. I'm only pretty sure, not positive.

My guess is that, in the time and place Jesus lived, meat may have been necessary for a healthy diet. Perhaps he and those around him didn't have access to enough nonmeat food to meet nutritional needs. That it's necessary for good health may be a good enough reason to eat meat. However, since in our context we can meet our nutritional needs without eating meat, the reason that was adequate in first-century Palestine falls short in the 20th-century United States.

Also it's worth noting that, although Jesus confronted evil in a variety of forms, he did not confront evil in every form. For example, he didn't tell slave-owners to release their slaves, and he didn't invite any women to be among his 12 closest disciples. That doesn't mean he would now favor the reintroduction of slavery or that he would have opposed the idea of women being recognized leaders in his church. He seems to have accepted some evil aspects of his culture in order to focus his energy elsewhere.

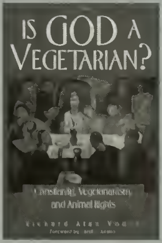
But just as large numbers of Christians would now call slavery evil and encourage women to serve in the church according to their gifts, so the eating of meat can be rejected as an unjustifiable compromise with a fallen world.

Are you interested in entering more deeply into Christ's kingdom of peace, to the extent that's possible now? One way to do that is to give up meat.

The only reason we do it is because of the pleasure we get from it, and so every bit of meat we eat is from an animal slaughtered for our pleasure.

John Zimmerman is pastor of Rocky Ford (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Is God a Vegetarian? Christianity, Vegetarianism and Animal Rights by Richard Alan Young (Open Court, 1999, $19.95) looks at Jewish and Christian traditions on animal-related issues. The title, Young writes in his preface, "is not intended literally" but "designed to lead us into discussion." Instead he sees it as a metaphor that best describes God in today's context. He writes, "Is not the God of the Bible a God of love, justice and peace, who would never kill to satisfy selfish desires, who sides with the oppressed, and who would like us to live at peace without killing and war?" Each chapter explores a question, such as these: Was Jesus a vegetarian? Was Noah's Ark an early food factory? Doesn't God care about our health? Didn't Paul condemn vegetarianism as heresy? What then shall we eat? Young, a professor of New Testament at Temple Baptist Seminary, includes vegetarian recipes and concludes with practical advice on how to become a vegetarian. Not everyone will be convinced by Young's arguments, but his book should at least provoke thought.—*Gordon Houser*



Eastern District sets course with new church, votes down motion not to join integrated body

LANSDALE, Pa.—The oldest segment of the General Conference Mennonite Church will remain with the church, Eastern District Conference delegates decided at a special session March 18. By a 114-104 vote, they defeated a motion not to join Mennonite Church USA, the integrated church expected to replace the current GC and Mennonite Church (MC) bodies next year.

With only 48 percent of delegates supporting the resolution, it fell substantially short of the two-thirds vote required for passage. Twenty-four of the conference's 26 congregations were represented at the meeting.

The action—the first major referendum on Mennonite Church USA—does not mean all Eastern District members will go along with the integrated church. But after years of discussion and debate, dissenting congregations and individuals can make their decisions about future affiliation knowing that the conference has set its course with the new church.

"I hope this [vote] provides the clarity that a lot of congregations were looking for," said conference president Phil Bergstresser.

The integration process had highlighted longstanding factions in the conference, leaving Eastern District's future uncertain. Issues such as polity, homosexuality and the confession of faith have generated several calls for the conference to cut its ties to the denomination. At the same time, Eastern District is home to staunch supporters of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church USA.

The resolution was brought by East Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., with the endorsement of 10 other congregations. East Swamp pastor Burge Troxel says the vote allows all sides to move on. "This frees up the Eastern District to pursue the goals for integration, and those that don't want to do that can form their own associations to carry on their own ministries," he said.

Troxel says East Swamp will probably now withdraw from Eastern District and seek other Anabaptist fellowship. The congregation withdrew its GC membership earlier this year.

Others indicate they will bide their time until next summer's GC-MC assembly in Nashville, Tenn. Carlton Minnis, delegate from Second Mennonite Church in Philadelphia, said his congregation is not looking to withdraw from the conference. "But what we are interested in is preservation of the Word," he said.

Still other congregations are grappling with internal divisions. For example, Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa., was split virtually in half in a congregational straw vote on the resolution not to join Mennonite Church USA.

About 350 people—delegates, conference leaders and some 100 other observers—gathered at Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, Lansdale, for the somber, 2½-hour meeting. "It is not a day you are looking forward to," said conference minister Warren Tyson. "However, it is probably a day that needed to come."

The bulk of discussion challenged the decision to require a two-thirds vote for passage of the resolution. Conference leaders had ruled that the resolution was a proposal to amend the constitution by changing the conference's denominational affiliation.

"The logic is that by leaving Mennonite Church USA you are leaving the General Conference Mennonite Church," Bergstresser explained to the delegates.

But resolution supporters contended that only a simple majority vote should be required because the action applied only to the future church structure and not the current one. "That's why we made no reference to the General Conference in the resolution, ... and we're disappointed that it has been interpreted as a constitutional change," Troxel said.

While the conference faces separations, it also heard a call to remain united in outreach. Congregational withdrawals raised concerns about Eastern District's ability to continue supporting current mission efforts, such as church planting, inner-city Philadelphia ministries and camping. But a statement from two pastors on different sides of the Mennonite Church USA issue said that despite differing convictions, "we all intend to continue to prayerfully support the ongoing mission ministries to which God has called us."

The statement was signed by Jim Amstutz of West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, and Bob Gerhart of Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa. Amstutz is a Mennonite Church USA proponent, while Gerhart has been a prominent spokesperson for those with concerns about the new denomination.—*Rich Preheim*

Conference includes oldest churches

Eastern District Conference's roots go back to 1847, when, under John Oberholtzer's leadership, 16 congregations left Franconia Conference to form the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference. It became the Eastern District of the new General Conference Mennonite Church in 1863.

Among the conference's members are some of the oldest Mennonite congregations in North America, including Germantown Mennonite Church, Philadelphia, organized in 1683; Lower Skippack Mennonite Church, Skippack, Pa., organized in 1702; and West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., organized in 1717.
—Rich Preheim

Correction: Eastern District Conference member West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa., is not an associate member of Franconia Conference as reported in the March 14 issue. West Swamp has asked for associate membership, but Franconia currently does not provide for such status.

Flood response empties MCC warehouses

Mozambique needs may postpone shipments elsewhere

CATEMBE, Mozambique—Directly beyond the veranda of a once-classy Portuguese hotel restaurant is a stunning view of the bay and skyline of Maputo, Mozambique's capital city. But for the 460 people living in the abandoned hotel, their view has been clouded by the fact that they are refugees of the worst flood to hit the country in 50 years.

After a month and a half of heavy rains, including a cyclone, nearly half a million people have been left homeless and more than 300 are dead throughout central and southern Mozambique. More rain is expected through the month of March.

"We never thought the water would come up this far," says Maria Zacarias Chauqe, one of the Catembe refugees. "The water was rising until it reached the tables in our houses."

While the Catembe hotel is full, Mennonite Central Committee warehouses in North America are empty. A mid-March relief shipment to Mozambique worth more than $1 million has depleted MCC's supply of comforters, used clothing and health and school kits. Seventeen thousand kits, 30,000 comforters and a 40-foot container of clothing are en route.

MCC officials are now concerned about how they will fill 10 shipments to Russia, Ukraine, North Korea and Iraq planned for April. They may have to be postponed.

"Workers and partners on the ground [in Mozambique] said they needed relief supplies immediately," says Brenda Wagner, MCC Constituency Ministries director. "We didn't have enough comforters, but the Lutherans offered to share some, so we were able to send the requested number. But now we have very few comforters left."

MCC is spending an additional $298,000 to buy 20,000 blankets and 5,000 "survival kits" of pots and pans, cups, plates, utensils, water jugs, plastic tarps, soap and buckets. The kits, assembled in neighboring Swaziland, are scheduled to be distributed starting in late March.

Work in Mozambique is expected to stretch into September. Future plans include providing seeds and tools for farmers to plant crops in August.

In all these efforts, MCC is working with its longtime partner, the Christian Council of Mozambique. CCM was one of the first groups in the country to respond to the emergency, distributing food to victims shortly after the floods occurred. MCC contributed $20,000 toward the distribution.

MCC funds have also been used to rebuild homes in Marracuene, a village near Maputo. MCC worker Michelle Janzen, who is coordinating the agency's relief work, visited Marracuene on March 9 and reported seeing numerous homes rebuilt with MCC money. Most were complete except for the roofs, as corrugated metal sheets had not yet been shipped to the area. In the meantime, people were sleeping in tents.—*MCC News Service*

MCC photo by Gustav Guenther

Food for Burundi

Dislocated Burundians confined to a camp by the government receive food provided in part by Mennonite Central Committee. MCC contributed $84,000 to a program run by a group of Burundian pastors to distribute beans, rice, flour, oil, salt, soap, plates and cups to 17,300 people in three camps during March. Nationwide, some 320,000 people have been put into camps in an effort to clear the countryside and flush out rebels.

Church honored for smoothing road

The Christian journey is challenging enough. For people with disabilities, it can be even more difficult because of steps, bathrooms and other obstacles.

College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., has been recognized for trying to make the road smoother. In its March 12 worship service, the congregation was given a Caring Church Award from the Christian Council on Persons With Disabilities.

The citation noted no steps at any of the church entrances, space for wheelchairs in the sanctuary and bathrooms, taping of services for members unable to attend and mainstreaming people with developmental disabilities.

"A youth with autism serves on the youth group executive council," the citation also said. "A member with aphasia participates in nonverbal dramas."

The Milwaukee-based Council on Persons With Disabilities was founded by Joni Erickson Tada, who has become a well-known author and speaker following an accident that left her a quadriplegic.

Giving voice

MVS worker honored for interpreter program

I said, "Lord, I will stay home until you take Mom and Dad, and then I will be ready to go wherever you want me."

—Eileen Rolon

SIOUX FALLS, S.D.—Eileen Rolon says her goal in life is not to accumulate money but "to accumulate blessings."

Rolon, who recently completed a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS)assignment with Lutheran Social Services in Sioux Falls, has received another blessing. Last month she was honored as LSS volunteer of the year. Rolon, a Puerto Rico native, was recognized for developing from scratch LSS's Community Interpretive Services, which hires interpreters for immigrants' needs, such as medical and legal.

"People would have to take their kids out of school or get a friend or relative to interpret for them," Rolon says. "We didn't think a friend or relative was always the best choice."

The program has about 60 interpreters in 39 languages and dialects, including Amharic, Arabic, Bosnian, Italian, Kurdish, Russian, Spanish and Swahili.

In addition to providing a needed service, Community Interpretive Services generates economic development. "Our interpreters get paid, so this is a small business. It's income for them," says Rolon, who became an LSS staff member at the end of her MVS term.

Growing up in Aibonito, Puerto Rico, she had contact with North American volunteers at the local Mennonite school, hospital and congregations. "It really touched me the way they left everything they had to come and be with us," says Rolon.

But she put her hopes of service on hold in order to take care of her parents. "I said, 'Lord, I will stay home until you take Mom and Dad, and then I will be ready to go wherever you want me,' " says Rolon, who is 52 and single.

After her parents died, she started again thinking of service. Rolon applied to MVS three years ago, but the process moved slowly. Then she found out that the MVS office was still waiting for some of her references.

"I asked my pastor [at Iglesia Menonita de Aibonito] why he hadn't sent a reference," Rolon recalls. "He told me he didn't want to send it because he didn't want me to leave. But he finally sent it."

Still, Rolon's decision to join MVS wasn't easy. She was scared of computers (which she later mastered), and friends urged her to prepare financially for retirement. "I kept thinking of excuses not to go," she says. "Then I read in Exodus about God talking to Moses, who had so many excuses. And I thought, 'God is talking to me.' "*—Melanie Zuercher for GCMC and MBM news services*

Puerto Rico: Spanish materials needed

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—If the relationship between Puerto Rico Conference and the emerging Mennonite Church USA is going to develop, the conference says it needs church documents in Spanish.

At its annual conference March 9-12, Puerto Rico passed a resolution that further discussions with Mennonite Church USA are contingent on having Spanish-language versions of the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and of the membership guidelines, which are in process.

Delegates appreciated conversations with Miriam Martin of the Mennonite Church USA Transformation Team and Nancy Rodriguez-Lora of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board during the meeting. But the delegates also expressed frustration for the lack of integration-related documents.

The conference also passed a resolution related to the U.S. Marines' use of part of the neighboring island of Vieques as a firing range. The resolution called for indentification with the people of Vieques and asked that opposition be voiced in an Anabaptist manner.*—Levi Miller*

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Paraguayan Mennonites, Catholics meet

ASUNCION, Paraguay—Two Paraguayan Mennonites joined a group of Catholic leaders in the Chaco for a one-day dialogue in January about inter-church relations. The Mennonites were invited because they are the largest group of evangelicals in the region.

Werner Franz, director of the Mennonite seminary in Asunción, and Gundolf Niebuhr, a historian and lay minister from Filadelfia, spoke of Anabaptist-Mennonite origins and beliefs.

"There was general agreement among the Catholic participants that encounters should be fostered in the local parish, … that common initiatives must be undertaken for community development and work with the marginalized," says Niebuhr.

Outreach efforts in the Chaco by both Catholics and evangelicals over the past 75 years have produced tensions between the two groups.—*MWC News Service*

Three churches to receive building grants

NEWTON, Kan.—Mennonite congregations in three countries will receive funds from Mennonite Men to buy and build new meetinghouses. Mennonite Men's Laymen's Council approved the grants during its annual meeting Feb. 12. The grants are made through Mennonite Men's Tenth Man program.

Vietnamese/Chinese Mennonite Church in Edmonton will receive $34,000. A second grant, made to the Commission on Overseas Mission, will be divided between two congregations. Armenia (Colombia) Mennonite Church will receive $2,700. The congregation's church building was heavily damaged in a 1998 earthquake. People in Transformation Mennonite Church in Mexico City will receive $10,000.—*GCMC News Service*

MMA recognizes field representatives

SOUTH BEND, Ind.—Norman Maust of Goshen, Ind., was named Mennonite Mutual Aid Counselor of the Year at MMA's national conference March 3-5 in South Bend.

Other field representatives honored by MMA included Chad Hatter of Waynesboro, Va., Associate Counselor of the Year; Wendell Hoover of Mount Joy, Pa., Fast Start Counselor of the Year, which honors new counselors; Steve Bustos of Goshen, Fraternal Adviser of the Year; Greg W. Miller of South Bend, Mennonite Foundation Representative of the Year.—*MMA News Service*

Bosnian choir to make MCC-sponsored tour

AKRON, Pa.—Five years after war finally ended in Bosnia, Mennonite Central Committee is helping a chorus of voices rise above the ruins. In a tour sponsored by MCC, the interfaith choir Pontanima will tour the United States March 29 to April 15.

The choir's members come from Bosnia's major religions: Roman Catholicism, Serbian Orthodox Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They will give concerts in Harrisonburg, Va., on April 5; Bluffton, Ohio, on April 10; Goshen, Ind., on April 11; and Elkhart, Ind., on April 12. The choir will also perform in Boston, Chicago, New York and Washington. —*MCC News Service*

by the way …

The first Mennonite seminary was established in 1735 in Amsterdam.—*Mennonite Encyclopedia*

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Births

Benedict, Kara Morgan, March 4, to Jean (Sauder) and Neal Benedict, East Petersburg, Pa.

Burkholder, Kara Ann, Feb. 16, to Brian and Rachael (Janzen) Burkholder, Newton, Kan.

Carr-Pries, James Thomas, March 1, to Dave and Lisa Carr-Pries, Waterloo, Ont.

Hofer, Cordell John, Feb. 18, received for adoption Feb. 22 by Joyce (Hochstedler) and Mark Hofer, Millersburg, Ind.

Hoover, Elsa Grace, Feb. 3, to Jay Hoover and Elaine Martin, Washington, D.C.

Kulp, Taylor Loren, Feb. 24, to Julie (Knechel) and Loren Kulp, Perkiomenville, Pa.

Lund, Brooke Marie, Feb. 15, to Jennifer (Kapusta) and Paul Lund, Green Lane, Pa.

Miller, Rachel Katherine, Feb. 24, to Corey and Nancy (Unruh) Miller, Newton, Kan.

Myers, Leah Nicolle, Feb. 26, to Jeff and Sandra (Hunsberger) Myers, Schwenksville, Pa.

Rush, Dylan Elijah, Feb. 29, to Kenneth and Tricia (Tufton) Rush, Perkasie, Pa.

Tysinger, William Ray, Feb. 12, to Beth and William Tysinger, McGaheysville, Va.

Wagner, Heath Yoder, Feb. 27, to Rick and Sandra (Yoder) Wagner, Seaford, Va.

Marriages

Birkbeck/Dillon: Maria Birkbeck, Newport News, Va., and Ricky Dillon, Newport News, Feb. 19.

Claassen/Goosen: Michael Claassen, Marlin, Wash., and Staci Goosen, Goessel, Kan., Jan. 22 at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel.

Deaths

Birkey, Mary Johns, 86, Goshen, Ind., died March 5 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Melvin Birkey (deceased). Parents: Ira Samuel and Elizabeth Rickert Johns (deceased). Survivors: children Elizabeth Herring, Jane Otto, John; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 9 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Detrick, Harley Olen, 83, Springs, Pa., died Feb. 8. Spouse: Lucille Maust Detrick. Parents: Dennis and Harriet Beachy Detrick (deceased). Other survivors: children Roger, Kenneth, Barbara Brown, Harriet Berg; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 12 at Springs.

Gregory, Oma White, 69, Lebanon, Ore., died March 1. Spouse: Paul Gregory. Parents: Charles and Elizabeth Garner White (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen, John, Michael, Clyde, Rodney; 13 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 6 at Lebanon Mennonite Church.

Lehman, Ernest, 79, Goshen, Ind., died March 3 of a heart attack. Spouse: Mary Shank Lehman. Parents: Arthur and Nora Weaver Lehman (deceased). Other survivors: children Miriam, Suzan Hutchinson. Memorial service: March 6 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Malin, George Jr., 79, Pocomoke, Md., died Feb. 21 of renal failure. Spouse: Anna Hostetler Malin. Parents: George and Grace Malin (deceased). Other survivors: children Cathy Kurtz, George III, Joseph; foster daughter Joey Sterling; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Feb. 24 at Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover, Md.

Nelson, Perry, 93, Shipshewana, Ind., died March 4. Spouse: Lucy Mishler Nelson (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Elizabeth Eash Nelson (deceased). Survivors: children Faye Oesch, John, Samuel; 11 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 8 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Rohrer, Paul, 42, Lancaster, Pa., died March 1 of a heart attack. Spouse: Patti Whitcomb Rohrer. Parents: Kendig and Kathryn Rohrer. Other survivors: children Adam, Renee, Stephanie. Funeral: March 5 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Short, Pluma Yoder, 93, Archbold, Ohio, died March 1. Spouse: Sylvan Short (deceased). Parents: Solomon and Mary Neuhauser Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, Merle, Carol King; 11 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 3 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Zimmerman, Kenneth, 66, Beatrice, Neb., died Feb. 27. Spouse: Dorothy Peters Zimmerman. Parents: John and Magdalene Reimer Zimmerman (deceased). Other survivor: daughter Mary. Funeral: March 2 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event.

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classifieds

- **Wanted:** Part-time ***pastor*** for urban Mennonite church in Knoxville, Tenn. Please contact our overseer, Ed Godshall, at 704-462-1707.

- **Christopher Dock High School** seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2000-2001 school year: ***social studies teacher, English teacher, chemistry teacher***. Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Called to ministry?** Swamp Mennonite Church in rural southeastern Pennsylvania, one hour north of Philadelphia, seeking full-time ***associate pastor of youth ministries***. Utilize your gifts in our Anabaptist community.

  Send resume to Swamp Mennonite Church, attn. Search Committee, 2125 Rosedale Road, Quakertown, PA 18951; email swamppb@fast.net

- **Kraybill Mennonite School**, Mount Joy, Pa., is accepting applications for the following teaching positions: ***kindergarten*** (full- or part-time), ***grade 2*** and ***6th grade language/math***. Applicants contact John Weber, Administrator, 598 Kraybill Church Road, Mount Joy, PA 17552; 717-653-5236; fax 717-653-7334.

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., seeks ***summer staff*** June 18-Aug. 11: Paid positions for cook, assistant cook, maintenance leader and counselors. Also needed are weekly kitchen and maintenance volunteers. More information: 2610 Lynds Hill Rd., Plymouth, VT 05056; 802-672-3959; email bbc@valley.net

- **Freeman Academy** seeks the following: ***full-time 5th/6th-grade combination classroom teacher***, salary $20,600-$31,150 plus benefits; ***part-time 7th/8th-grade combination classroom teacher***, salary $10,300-$15,500 plus benefits.

  Send LOA, resume, creds., trans. and cert. to Dr. Larry Horner, Freeman Academy, P.O. Box 1000, Freeman, SD 57029. Closing date 3-31.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School**, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, seeks a full-time ***physical, health and driver education*** teacher for grades 6-12. Applicant shall demonstrate effective teaching skills, integration of faith into the classroom, with a commitment to the Mennonite Church Confession of Faith.

  Fax resumes to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528. Application processing will begin April 1.

- **Carman Mennonite Church** invites applications for a full-time ***pastor***. Active membership 127; attendance Sunday a.m. 150. Degree from Anabaptist-Mennonite seminary (college) preferred. Carman has a population of 2,700 and is one hour southwest of Winnipeg.

  Send resumes and inquiries to Ed Klassen, Search Committee chair, Box 549, Carman, MB R0G 0B0; 204-745-2736; fax 204-745-2762; email tempo829@mb.sympatico.ca

- **Herald Press** seeks applicants for ***trade publishing book editor***. Plans, acquires and develops book manuscripts in assigned subject areas to carry out an international Anabaptist-Mennonite book publishing program, releasing 20 to 25 titles a year. Begins summer of 2000.

  Send inquiry or application with resume to Awanda Pritts, Human Resources, Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683; email Apritts@mph.org

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a candidate for the position of full-time ***youth pastor***. Currently Franconia has over 100 jr. & sr. high youth involved in its exciting and growing program. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth.

  Interested people should send a resume to: Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email info@franconiamennonite.org

- **Crown Hill Mennonite Church**, Rittman, Ohio, owns a 17-unit apartment building known as Crown Hill Manor, and is seeking mature Christian couple willing to serve God as ***resident managers***. Applicants to have building and lawn maintenance skills and should be able to relate well with people. Approximately 80 hrs/month, time off negotiable. Apartment with utilities is provided.

  Contact Floyd Fawcett, 7516 Zigler Road, Sterling, OH 44276; 330-939-2141.

- **Locust Grove Mennonite Church** offers challenging full-time vocation in south central Michigan for ***seasoned pastor***. He will have Anabaptist convictions, gifts of preaching, coordinating, teaching for mission in growing rural congregation (ca. 150) with agricultural, business, educational, nursing occupations.

  Contact Chair, Search Committee, 63435 Borgert Rd., Sturgis, MI 49091; 616-659-5916; email dsommers@net-link.net

- **Hesston College *resident director*** for men's residence hall. As part of the Student Life team, the resident director will be a role model and mentor for students; select, train and supervise student staff; assist in enforcement of campus lifestyle standards. Qualifications: strong Christian faith, commitment to the Mennonite Church, leadership ability, listening and relational skills. Nine-month full-time position. Bachelor's degree preferred. Two-year commitment minimum.

  Apply to Dean of Students, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. For information call 316-327-8234 or email charh@hesston.edu. Deadline April 14.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** has one- and two-week ***service opportunities*** available assisting with the summer camping program, June 25-July 6, 2000. Camp directing, music and recreation leading and counseling opportunities available. Families of a spouse assisting with the programs receive free room and board, and children receive a complimentary week of camp. Three-month summer service positions also available for lifeguards and dining hall staff.

  Call Andrea Welty Peachey at 1-800-839-1021 or 724-423-2056; email info@laurelville.org (subject: summer camps)

- **Choice Books Central Office** seeks ***accountant-information systems administrator***. Responsibilities: manage central office accounting system; train/support CB Distributor accounting staff; develop/support local area networks; financial budgeting/planning. Qualifications: accounting/computer systems experience; technical, organizational skills; database management experience. Education: accounting/computer information degree.

  Please submit resume to John Bomberger, Choice Books, 2387 Grace Chapel Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22801; fax 540-434-9894; email bombergerj@choicebooks.org

- **Hesston College *associate director of development***. The associate director cultivates relationships with constituents, develops and implements strategies to achieve the Annual Fund goal, and manages development office efforts in assigned region. Qualifications: integrity, responsibility, people skills, ability to work independently, excellent verbal and written communication skills, and commitment to Hesston College, the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education. Available July 1.

  Send resume and cover letter to Elam Peachey, Director of Development, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Email elamp@hesston.edu

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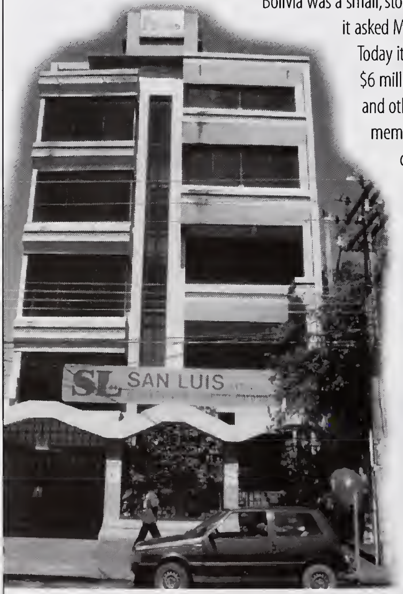
- **Hesston College** ***alumni assistant***. The alumni assistant helps coordinate alumni events, reunions, alumni board meetings and mailings, and church relations projects, helps organize campus special events weekends and provides secretarial support for the capital campaign coordinator. Qualifications: outgoing personality, people skills, computer competency, ability to organize and attend to detail, and commitment to Mennonite higher education. Flexible seven-hour workday.

  To apply, send resume and cover letter to Dallas Stutzman, Director of Alumni Relations, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8110 or email DallasS@hesston.edu



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- **The Arkansas Valley Resource Center**, an agency committed to helping victims of violence in La Junta, Colo. is looking for someone who would be willing to ***work in our shelter/safe house***. Job responsibilities include working with clients to maintain their safety, promoting well-being, and regular maintenance chores to keep the shelter in good functioning order. Qualified applicants will display a commitment to helping and supporting victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. The ability to maintain a nonanxious presence in crisis situations is important. Benefits include a place to live with utilities included, and salary.

  Interested people should direct their inquiries and resumes to Merritt Welty, Emmanuel Mennonite Church, 502 Harriet Ave., La Junta, CO 81050. For more information call 719-384-9673 or 719-384-5189.

- **Mennonite College Federation** invites applications from qualified women and men to a faculty appointment in the area of ***composing/church music*** for fall 2000. Mennonite College Federation is a cooperative association of three colleges in Winnipeg (Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Menno Simons College), committed to the biblical faith and rooted in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. For details about the opening, see our website at www.MCFed.mb.ca

  Please send applications to Executive Assistant, Deans Committee, Mennonite College Federation, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. Processing of applications will begin April 24.

- **Southfield Village**, a new continuing care retirement community in South Bend, Ind., seeks an ***executive director*** to develop and manage the 25-acre campus. The organization's 14-member nonprofit board consists of representatives from eight area denominations and has a mission to provide senior services "in the spirit of the reconciling and healing example of Jesus Christ." Construction for Phase 1, including 60 health-care beds and 64 assisted living apartments, is already in progress and scheduled to open in fall 2000. The Master Plan calls for expansion across the continuum beginning with pre-sales of independent garden-style apartments in January 2000.

  Qualified candidates must be a licensed nursing home administrator, have significant senior health-care/housing experience, be able to work effectively with a board of directors, use a collaborative approach to decision making, and bring an entrepreneurial spirit to the work environment. Southfield Village is sponsored by Mennonite Health Services and managed by Greencroft Inc.

  Please send resume to: Kirk Stiffney, Greencroft Inc., P.O. Box 819, Goshen, IN 46527-0819; email Kstiffney@cs.com

- **Goshen College** is seeking to fill a new, full-time, tenure-track faculty position in ***peace, justice and conflict studies***. This is an opportunity to help build an undergraduate curricular program in the area of violence prevention and conflict mediation. This new program will develop alongside a strong existing peace and justice studies program of many years standing. Responsibilities will include developing and supervising a concentration of courses in conflict studies, teaching six to eight courses in the peace, justice and conflict studies department. In addition, responsibilities will include assisting the campus to develop and supervise a campuswide student peer mediation program. Candidates should have a Ph.D. in conflict studies or very closely related field (ABD acceptable). In order to be considered for this new position, candidates need to demonstrate competency in conflict mediation and resolution skills. Candidates should be personally committed to nonviolence in the management and resolution of conflict and need to be fully conversant with historical and contemporary traditions and practices of Christian pacifism. Prior undergraduate teaching experience is desirable. An ability to engage in interdisciplinary conversation with the disciplines of peace and justice studies, theology, ethics and/or biblical studies will significantly strengthen an individual's candidacy.

  Please send letter of application, curriculum vitae and three letters of reference to Paul A. Keim, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at www.goshen.edu under "employment." Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Faculty members are expected to share that commitment. Review of applications will begin April 3. The position will remain open until filled.

by Gordon Houser

A list of books that may be helpful in our Christian lives:

God and the Victim: Theological Reflections on Evil, Victimization, Justice and Forgiveness, edited by Lisa Barnes Lampman and Michelle D. Shattuck (Eerdmans, 1999, $16), explores the spiritual issues that victims face in the aftermath of crime and offers practical advice for assisting those in need. It is written by teachers, theologians and practitioners well-known for their expertise.

1-2 Peter, Jude by Erland Waltner and J. Daryl Charles (Herald Press, 1999, $21.99) is part of the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series. Waltner explains how 1 Peter applies Jesus' teaching on loving the enemy to the life situation of scattered Christians in Asia Minor. Charles shows how 2 Peter and Jude are relevant since the church still faces ethical compromises and pastoral dilemmas.

Compassionate Caring for the Sick and Dying by Sara Arline Thrash (Twenty-Third Publications, 2000, $9.95) offers support, encouragement and affirmation to volunteer caregivers as well as those pastorally concerned with visiting the seriously ill.

Wrestling with God and Cancer: A Personal Story by Beverly Lancour Sinke (Twenty-Third Publications, 2000, $9.95) tells the story of more than 15 years of ongoing struggle with a recurring disease by a mother of four and her continuing search for deeper meaning in life.

The Word: In and Out of Season; Homilies for Preachers, Reflections for Seekers by William J. Bausch (Twenty-Third Publications, 2000, $14.95) collects 60 easy-to-read-and-to-adapt reflections from a popular storytelling preacher and author.

Remember, Dad? A Journey Into Memory Loss by Lorlie Barkman (Kindred Productions, 2000, $7.95) provides an insightful glimpse into the journey the artist author and his family took as their father traveled the lonely road into memory loss.

Spiritual Manifestos: Visions for Renewed Religious Life in America from Young Spiritual Leaders of Many Faiths, edited by Niles Elliot Goldstein (SkyLight Paths, 2000, $21.95), includes stories and insights from 10 young spiritual leaders that challenge our assumptions about what religion is—and isn't. The publisher's address is Route 4, P.O. Box 237, Woodstock, VT 05091.

Peace and Justice Shall Embrace: Power and Theopolitics in the Bible: Essays in Honor of Millard Lind, edited by Ted Grimsrud and Loren L. Johns (Pandora Press, 2000, $22.95) provides fresh exegetical insights from the Bible and theological analysis with regard to peace, justice, power and theopolitics.

God of the Empty-Handed: Poverty, Power and the Kingdom of God by Jayakumar Christian (MARC, 1999, $21.95) explores the relationship of poverty to powerlessness, integrating anthropology, sociology, politics and theology. Christian, who has worked among the poor in India for more than 30 years, offers a new paradigm that can shape our responses to the poor and provide a workable framework for grass-roots practitioners.

Recommended reading

Looking for Jesus **by Virginia Stem Owens (Westminster John Knox, 1999, $18) combines biblical scholarship with a novelist's sensibility. Owens retells 23 stories about Jesus under the rubric of looking—for excitement, relief, a way out, a way in, answers, a fight, a reason to hope. She uses detail, dialogue and imaginative descriptions to bring the stories to life. She also offers helpful reflections on the relevance of the stories to our lives. She writes, "A magical element inevitably creeps into any culture's healing arts, even when practiced in modern skyscrapers." She is also confessional: "By setting out on a search for Jesus, equipped with a religious education and a spiritual itinerary, I have put myself in jeopardy." Owens helps us meet Jesus in fresh ways. She also includes a helpful "bibliographical farewell."**—*gh*

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Gordon Houser

No quick fix

Some of the people Jesus encountered wanted him to fix their problems and then let them go on their way. Many no doubt saw him as one more magician combing the countryside for followers.

We're not all that different. We want God to fix us, and the sooner the better. Don't give us some drawn-out process with no promise of success. Don't ask anything of us in return.

Once Jesus cast out a demon from a boy after his disciples had tried and failed. When they asked him why they couldn't do it, he said, "This kind can come out only through prayer" (Mark 9:29). Healing requires prayer, preparation and practice, not tricks.

Jesus saw many people come and go. Even his close followers, who hung around several years, got impatient. They were convinced this man was the promised Messiah who would overthrow their Roman oppressors. So when Jesus told them, "The Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed" (Mark 8:31), Peter rebuked him.

I imagine we would, too, given the circumstances. It's against our culture not to be successful. We're Number One, right? Who wants to follow someone who not only fails to care for us but gets himself killed?

Quick fixes are ingrained into our culture, into our psyches. If you don't want to work out a resolution to the conflict you're having with someone, cut them off.

We live in a land of the quick fix. Our market culture constantly promises us new products to make us more attractive, thinner, healthier, happier. Buy this and you'll be a better person. And next month, knowing the previous product didn't make you happy, because it can't, the seller is back with another pitch.

Listen to the politicians running for office. They talk about reducing your taxes or making you more prosperous. I don't hear any of them saying, "You already pay fewer taxes than citizens in most countries, and you're too wealthy anyway."

You also don't hear them address issues for which there are no seemingly easy, quick solutions. Raymond A. Schroth in *National Catholic Reporter* (March 10) lists five issues the candidates won't touch.

1. Racial integration. For the moment, forget baseball player John Rocker or the Confederate flag in South Carolina, racist as they are. Racism is a daily, destructive reality for millions of people who are excluded from basic opportunities because of the color of their skin.

2. Prisons. Schroth writes: "The 'freest' country in the world now has 2 million people in prison, a higher proportion of its citizens in jail than any country in history. Sixty percent of those in federal prison are there for nonviolent drug offenses. One in three black youths is either in prison or on parole."

3. The growing gap between the rich and poor. The top 1 percent of the population now controls 40 percent of the wealth. Meanwhile, the hundreds of thousands of homeless in this country are ignored.

4. Foreign policy. Conflicts abound, in the Congo, Kosovo, Israel, Northern Ireland, Russia and Chechnya, and Chiapas, Mexico. No one's talking about these trouble spots.

5. Character. Candidates talk about character but rarely show it. Instead, they smear one another with innuendo, following the credo: Win at all costs. The cost is great.

Quick fixes are ingrained into our culture, into our psyches. If someone's bad, execute them. If you don't want a baby, abort it. If you don't want to work out a resolution to the conflict you're having with someone, cut them off.

Amid this pervasive desire for instant gratification, there are signs of hope. The governor of Illinois, a Republican and a Catholic, called for a halt to executions after he saw that the state had found 13 death-row prisoners innocent of their crimes in the last 23 years.

Read in this issue (page 4) how bystanders can make a huge difference in reducing violence. Christian Peacemaker Teams has much to teach us about seeking a better way than the quick fix. With them we can say, "Stop the violence. This is not OK."

And with Jesus we can learn to wait and to pray.—*gh*

the Mennonite

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Request for forgiveness

We have heard the Pope's request for forgiveness. Should we as a Mennonite church be asking for forgiveness for anything? Let me suggest one area. In a 1998 book, *Lindale's Song,* James O. Lehman gives a carefully documented history of Lindale Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va., including various actions of Virginia Conference. This was the congregation in which I grew up. In 1936, mission work with African-Americans was begun on Gay Street in Harrisonburg. When the person in charge borrowed some chairs from a nearby congregation, the deacon "wondered if colored children would be sitting on those chairs. He seemed concerned about that" (p. 126).

Lehman reports that the issue of church membership for people of color and what that would mean in practice was a debated issue. Virginia Conference at one point recommended that, "keeping in line with our present practices of making a distinction between the sexes," foot washing and the kiss not be observed "between white and colored." Instead of the common cup for Communion, individual cups were used, and Communion participation was to be restricted "to the colored and those who are regular workers among them" (p. 128).

In 1945 the board of Eastern Mennonite School, Harrisonburg, was faced with the question of admission of a young African-American from the Broad Street church (the successor to the Gay Street Mission). The board denied the person admission on the basis of race. Three years later, acting school president John R. Mumaw admitted the first African-American student (p. 130).

This type of discrimination was not limited to those of us from the South. A Mennonite friend who grew up in Colorado told me about the flurry of activity that ensued when a family of Mexican migrant workers settled in the area and began attending his church. It was decided that they should attend a Spanish-speaking church in town.

Although we now see the non-Christian character of our earlier ways, would not a request for forgiveness be in order? Of course today we do not exclude anybody from our fellowship based on differences from us. Or do we?—*Henry D. Weaver, Santa Barbara, Calif.*

Eastern gratitude

The March 14 article "Some Congregations Contemplating Withdrawal as Time for Membership Decision Draws Closer" evoked in me deep pain and prompts me to express personal gratitude for some ways I experienced God's grace through Eastern District Conference.

It was through William Shelly Gottshall, my South Dakota pastor who had come from "the East," that I came into faith at the age of 15. Leaders of this conference visited and nurtured me when I was a seminary student in New York, 1935-38. It was to this conference that I was first called to pastoral ministry and then ordained in 1938. It was at a General Conference Mennonite Church session at Souderton, Pa., in 1941 that a statement of faith was adopted, which made possible the founding of Mennonite Biblical Seminary. It was the joint convention at Bethlehem, Pa., in 1983 that gave strong impetus to the integration/transformation process.

I was among those who kept a prayer vigil that the congregations of Eastern District Conference might remain with the larger body. I am aware that it continues to struggle with issues of biblical faithfulness, a concern I deeply share. How much we need each other and how much all of us would be impoverished if conferences or congregations dismember. Let us do all we can in Christ to maintain "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:2).—*Erland Waltner, Elkhart, Ind.*

Reconsidering anarchy

Harley Hofstetter suggests that Christians look foolish when we demand that the governing authorities disarm and refuse to use force (Readers Say, March 7). Yet Christians are called to witness to everyone, to invite them to repent and believe in the gospel. Some governing authorities who are under the delusion that they are true followers of Christ might even respond to the Christian witness of Mennonites by repudiating the use of weapons and leaving their offices.

Hofstetter says, "Let's not give the impression that we will tolerate anarchy." Not all Christians, however, see anarchy as negative. Leo Tolstoy taught that government was intrinsically violent and Christians therefore should advocate Christian anarchism. The Catholic Worker movement, which was heavily influenced by Tolstoy's views, is probably the most significant group of Christian anarchists today.

I don't call myself an anarchist because I look forward to Christ's second coming, when he will rule the world nonviolently for 1,000 years from his throne in Jerusalem. But until then, all human government is essentially out-

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readers say

side the perfection of Christ, and we should encourage rulers to become followers of Christ and renounce all violence.—*Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

Wrong spirit

In regard to the recent recommendation that we read the Harry Potter books (Mediaculture, March 7), I have examined them. On what basis should it be suggested that we read these books, especially our children? Just because the end is good, does it justify the means? Harry Potter books have a base of spiritism. Good is pictured as overcoming evil, but why recommend a base of occultism or witchcraft for our youth? Some will assuredly dabble in it because of what they read. Consider Leviticus 20:27, Revelation 21:8 and Revelation 22:15.—*Dean Hochstetler, Nappanee, Ind.*

Hope and excitement

Chester Wenger shared a message so timely for our church as we struggle toward transformation (Readers Say, March 7). I find hope and excitement in the March 24-26 "Consultation on Missional Identity" in Harrisonburg, Va., and in the Great Lakes Conference proposal to structure itself around mission districts ("Proposal for New Great Lakes-Area Conference Emphasizes Congregation-Centered Mission Work," March 21). But this new impetus for mission could be jeopardized by a legalistic handling of Scripture and doctrinal statements. The letter kills. The Spirit gives life.

The brothers and sisters of North Central Conference deserve our applause. While raising concerns about how the new Mennonite Church views Scripture, they are committing themselves not to withdraw from the church ("North Central Shares Concerns but Not Leaving," March 21). May their example not go unnoticed.—*Charles Shenk, Columbus, Ohio*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Christians in business belong in the church

The place to get help to face temptations to avarice and the unequal yoke.

by Calvin Redekop

Ask Christians in business in your congregation and many will tell you they feel marginalized, like second-class members. The complaint that business people are considered outcasts until fund-raising time is common. Christians through the years have believed the Christian faith and the world of business are incompatible.

Already in the second century A.D., Bishop Irenaeus said, "We Christians derive all we possess from an unrighteous source—by acting avariciously ourselves, or from Gentiles, who themselves obtained it avariciously." Historian Cecil J. Cadoux summarizes the early church's attitude as follows: "We find [in the records] a great deal said in deprecation of secular affairs in general and trade in particular. There is no such thing as clean money." Later, our Anabaptist forebears also shared this view. Peter Riedemann, spokesman for the Hutterite branch, in 1532 maintained: "We allow none of our members to do the work of a trader or merchant, since this is sinful business: As the wise man saith, 'It is almost impossible for a merchant and trader to keep himself from sin.'" Menno Simons wrote, "All those who are out to make money exclude God wholly from their hearts."

Although writers give no clear reasons how the "sinfulness" of business hindered the Christian witness, the consequences are clear. For example, the Roman Catholic tradition developed a clear distinction between the "religious" clergy, including the monastic movement, and the "secular" clergy and laity: those involved in the economics of producing, exchanging and consuming goods.

However, the apostle Paul wrote, "We toiled and we drudged, we worked for a living night and day—to set an example for you to imitate"(2 Thessalonians 3:8-9). Making tents and selling them were honorable tasks.

A millennium later, the great theologian Thomas Aquinas endorsed economic activity as compatible for the Christian and gave four reasons for it: (1) to provide the necessities of life (economic production); (2) to avoid idleness, hence keeping from evil; (3) to direct life into productive and creative channels (useful consumption) and (4) to share with the poor (distribution of goods).

That business could be a calling for Christians was supported by Mennonite Church leader Daniel Kauffman in 1928: "What! Business life a Christian service? Why not? Suppose that all Christian people in business would seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness—what do you suppose would be the effect?" Kauffman assumed that Christians can be in business, but he also proposed that business could be an avenue for proclaiming the gospel. He also implied that business is not always a witness.

Kauffman goes on: "Is there a greater hindrance to the cause of Christ today than inconsistent business methods on the part of Christians? Christians in business too seldom realize the power that falls within their sphere of opportunity."

Servants of God: In 1955, the Western District of the General Conference Mennonite Church stated: "We believe that menial and routine tasks will become vitally significant when a man is convinced that in his daily tasks he is advancing the will of God. We believe many people are called to business as a vocation and are the servants of God and the people."

Christians can be in business, but often the temptations of unethical actions have been too great. The problem may be that there are dangers in the world of business that tend to compromise that witness.

Jesus (whose father was a businessman) pinpoints certain aspects of the world of economics that can corrupt people and hence their witness. He addressed the temptation of love of money or materialistic power as follows: "If you want to go the whole way, sell your possessions and give to the poor, then you will have riches in heaven" (Matthew 19:21). Around A.D. 180, Clement of Alexandria said: "Wealth is a burden, endangering salvation. What Christ wants us to do is to actually cast away selfish passions." The issue is not economic activity—the production, distribution and consumption of material goods (wealth)—but our attitudes toward wealth. If we become obsessed with or controlled by wealth, then the strictures of Jesus, Clement, Cyprianus and others come into play. Cyprianus (circa A.D. 290) said the only solution to avarice is sharing: "He who shares his goods with others is an imitator of God."

Avarice refers to materialism—acquiring things, resulting in conspicuous expenditures and consumption. An economist friend of mine says, "It's not what we produce or give away that determines whether we are avaricious, but what we keep for ourselves." Being a Christian implies modesty in lifestyle. And being suc-

Being a Christian implies modesty in lifestyle. And being successful in business leads to the temptation of a lavish lifestyle.

cessful in business leads to the temptation of a lavish lifestyle.

Another hindrance to being Christian in business is the "unequal yoke." In the New Testament, this refers to aligning oneself with the values and lifestyles of unbelievers. We interact with unbelievers every day, but the unequal yoke relationship is especially dangerous in business because it involves walking closely with someone whose values are different. The temptation to compromise our values and ethics to meet the expectations and demands of business partners and clients in the world is tremendous.

The Strasbourg Discipline of 1568 says: "No brother shall engage in buying or building or entering into any other large financial undertaking without the counsel, prior knowledge and consent of the brotherhood and elders." Has any congregation in recent centuries ever taken this position?

Dual temptations: According to *The Mennonite Mosaic* by J. Howard Kauffman and Leo Driedger (Herald Press, 1991), over 60 percent of Mennonites are active in professional, managerial, trade or labor activities associated with the world of business. What we need are models of people who have been able to avoid the dual temptations of avarice and the unequal yoke.

I once heard R.G. LeTourneau, author of *God Runs My Business*, talk about his attempts to be a Christian in business. What impressed me most was that he gave 90 percent of his business profits to the work of God's kingdom. This also impressed Jacob A. and Lucy Shenk of Harrisonburg, Va. Lucy says: "For a good many years our giving was rather unplanned. We felt that as our business grew we should be giving more and in a planned way. About this time Jacob read *God Runs My Business*. After checking with his bankers, tax consultants and finally the Internal Revenue Service, Jacob determined that we would also give 90 percent of net profits to the church."

Not only did the Shenks give lavishly; their lifestyle was so modest that few people could tell how profitable the business was. They easily passed the first critical hindrance to the witness, avoiding avarice.

At the same time, Jacob's relationships to "outsiders" were conducted on his terms. In one instance, a supplier submitted a bill for an order and Jacob replied, "Mr. Jones, you cannot stay in business with such a small profit" and gave him a larger payment.

The Virginia Poultry Association normally met over the weekend. Jacob, in his modest but insistent way, got the association to change the tradition, reserving Sunday for worship. The April 1950 issue of *Virginia Poultryman* said, "The sudden death of Jacob A. Shenk takes from the poultry industry one of the most progressive poultry men of the area. With his interest in progress and well-being of the poultry industry, Mr. Shenk combined deep loyalty and devoted service to his church and community. His well-balanced life gave him a broad viewpoint, and his considered service and opinion were highly valued by all who knew him." Jacob worked in the world without yoking with the values of unbelievers.

The crucial factors that keep us from having more examples of businesspeople witnessing to the gospel are that too few of us believe it can be done.

In Matthew 25:35-36, Jesus says: "I was hungry and you gave me food [the business of producing, distributing and consuming human necessities], … I was a stranger and you welcomed me [the business of building homes, offices, places of work, inns], I was naked and you gave me clothing [the business of producing clothing], I was sick and you took care of me [the business of health care]."

Jesus tells us in Matthew 5:13-14 that we are the salt and the light of the world, meaning we are a witness to the world. He also says that salt can lose its saltiness and the light can be put under a tub. The temptations for Christians in business to do just that are great. What hinders us from flooding the arena of business and industry with salt and light? We have models who have done just this. What about the rest of us? Do we believe Christians can witness in business? More importantly, do we demonstrate it?

Calvin Redekop is a retired sociology teacher who now lives in Harrisonburg, Va.

The crucial factors that keep us from having more examples of businesspeople witnessing to the gospel are that too few of us believe it can be done.

Lessons of a flower

Seemingly small efforts can connect us with people around the world.

by Ben Hartman

Robert Maust

There is something you can learn from a single flower. This, at least, is what my Mennonite community taught me as a child. Certain verses—such as, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow" (Matthew 6:28) and, "The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it" (Psalm 24:1)—have always stayed with me.

I grew up surrounded by Amish and Mennonite farms. Many of the farmers working these small farms reverenced nature and knew that in her details they could find God. Agriculture for them was more than a livelihood—it was holy work.

That is why I came away so disturbed from a visit to Central America, where I lived with poor farmers who were forced like slaves to do the same work as my Amish and Mennonite neighbors back home.

Many of these farmers did not even own their own land—it had been snatched away by multinational "corporate farms," which shipped the produce they grew to the United States, perhaps even to the shelves of my hometown grocery store. Many of the land barons running the corporate farms forced struggling farmers to work on their land, often paying them less than $3 a day. Other farmers moved with their families to the slums of the cities, living in cardboard and tin houses. Those who did have land farmed on what was left over: the dangerously steep volcano slopes, the clay-filled land in the mountains, the nearly infertile highland soil.

When I returned to the United States, I knew I had to respond. So I planted seeds. In fact, I planted hundreds of them—in my back yard.

My garden began as an experiment. I wanted to grow food in a way that was sensitive to the needs of my global community and did not exploit land and people. In the fall, amid brown leaves and crisp air, I tilled a half acre behind the family house. During the winter I found seven families from my church who agreed to help out: In exchange for money, they would receive a crate of fresh produce every week once the growing season began.

I grew all my food organically, which not only preserved the environment and enriched the soil (How I loved to handle that dark, wormy and almost breathing earth!) but also made my produce safer to eat.

When I delivered my vegetables and fruits, my customers were grateful for the opportunity to support local agriculture—it gave them an alternative to the grocery store, where they did not know the conditions under which their food was grown.

As the season progressed I gave away large portions of the money I made to organizations—such as Christian Peacemaker Teams and Mennonite Central Committee—that are working to bring justice to people like those I lived with in Central America.

Despite some long days that left me with many aching muscles, the project was full of beautiful surprises. One evening in August, a yellow cosmos flower, swaying like a feather in a slow breeze, caught my eye. I hurried inside and grabbed my painting supplies, resolved to capture this beauty before the sun left it.

I painted carefully and with awe. Each fragile petal was a jewel. Like the world's poor countries and forgotten people, these petals were treasures with a beauty rarely seen. When nearly finished, I set my work down to go inside for a drink and to shake the soreness out of my hands. I returned and gasped at what I saw: My painting lay crumpled, dirty and torn in the grass, like a body slain, a hope slashed, covered in teeth marks and slobber left by the farm dog, whom I had wrongly assumed was sleeping, caged in its pen. My project finished, I collected my supplies and returned to the house.

Was I wasting my time? Or could I have convinced the world that this yellow cosmos was indeed a thing of beauty, an object worth at least my effort to sit down for a few minutes to try and keep alive? These are questions for real warriors.

Ben Hartman is a student at Goshen (Ind.) College and a member of Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen.

My garden began as an experiment. I wanted to grow food in a way that was sensitive to the needs of my global community and did not exploit land and people.

Lenten reflections

Anointed by Somali women friends

by Bertha Beachy

Asha, a Somali friend, invited me to a "madax shub" for Shamis at Asha's house. I knew Shamis had had surgery earlier for a blood clot but was now out of the hospital and recovering.

Shamis, an Oxford graduate, came from London. She was a consultant for various international groups and traveled in and out of Somalia. On her last trip, a window fell on her head, causing the clot. One recent commitment of my Somali women friends is to support each other in every way possible. They wanted Shamis to experience our caring for her. I understood that "madax shub" meant anointing with oil, but I did not know the details.

I arrived first. Asha soon returned from the hospital looking exhausted. She had spent the night there with her sick baby, Amina, who would be released later.

One by one the women arrived, gracefully sliding out of their slippers as they stepped on the Persian rug. Some came in brightly colored dresses with matching, flowing head scarfs. Others came in the one-color, one-piece Islamic outfits that covered them from head to ankle. Some promptly discarded them and others uncovered their hair since it was a women-only meeting. Everyone wore several pieces of their favorite gold jewelry, except Fatuma, who had lived in the United States for many years.

Eventually, nine of us had gathered. We ate delicious rice with a chili sauce, browned goat meat, drank sweet camel milk and finished with fruit and sweet, spicy Somali tea. The conversation and laughter flowed between us like a warm blanket—from concern for baby Amina to the latest reports about Djibouti President Ghelli's speech about Somalia in the United Nations. Three of the women planned to leave for a meeting in Ethiopia the next day.

With the food finished, they turned to the anointing. Asha brought in a small bowl of warm oil. She put some on the head of each person in the circle, except Shamis. The doctor had forbidden her to use oil until the scar had completely healed. Incense filled the room, and the burner was passed from person to person.

Zakia, sitting to my left, began prayers with the traditional "in the name of God the Merciful and Compassionate One." All prayer begins with these words, whether it is the ritual or the "du'o" prayer that is offered extemporaneously. Zakia prayed for the healing of Shamis, baby Amina and for peace in Somalia. The group kept responding with "Amin" (amen) at appropriate moments.

Then she turned to me and said, "Hadiya, we pray around the circle and you are next." I experienced a moment of grace to be included without question. They value my prayers, as I do theirs. After everyone had prayed, several commented, "You pray like we do."

Asha brought in a small bowl of warm oil. She put some on the head of each person in the circle, except Shamis. Incense filled the room, and the burner was passed from person to person.

Asha went out to bring in a golden tray with expensive perfumes—some from Paris, others from Saudi Arabia. Each person checked the gorgeous bottles, and most selected more than one. Perfume was the final blessing that sent Shamis and all of us on our way.

Fatuma insisted on walking with me, though I often walk this way by myself. This was also a typical gift of Somali hospitality.

Bertha Beachy is from Goshen, Ind., where she is a member of Assembly Mennonite Church. She directs Mennonite Central Committee's Somalia program.

Spring break time to say thank you

Like many college students, Goshen (Ind.) College freshman Rolando Sosa headed south for spring break. But instead of lounging on a beach, Sosa expressed appreciation.

Sosa was one of 11 Goshen students and faculty members who spent their February break working at Jubilee Partners, an intentional Christian community in Comer, Ga.

Sosa, then 24, illegally entered the United States in 1981 after fleeing his war-torn homeland of El Salvador. When his application for refugee status was rejected three years later, Sosa sought out Jubilee Partners, which has helped many refugees settle in North America.

The community soon helped Sosa and his wife settle in Calgary, where a local Mennonite congregation assisted them.

The family moved to Goshen last fall. Sosa is studying Hispanic ministries and social work.

Upon learning of Goshen's spring break trip to Jubilee Partners, Sosa says, "I had to go back. I had to say thank you."

EMM-MCC photo by Chris Landes

Yasuko Hashimoto (center) teaches origami, or the art of Japanese paper folding, to fellow participants in an Asia Mennonite Conference work camp in February. Hashimoto is from Japan. Other participants came from Australia, India, Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan.

Asians build relationships—and a school

Work camp joins 18 Mennonites from eight countries

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia—Hui-Chen Hsu from Taiwan felt some anxiety going to Cambodia. But after participating in the Asia Mennonite Conference (AMC) International Peace Work Camp, her feelings changed. "Cambodia is a good place," she says.

Hsu was one of 18 Mennonites from eight nations in Asia who gathered for the 10-day work camp in February to build relationships and elementary school classrooms in a rural village. Showers were taken at the village well, and participants slept on the floor of the community center or in a local village home. For many, this was a new way of life.

"Living in the village was the best and worst experience for me—no toilet, no water, no electricity," says Yasuko Hashimoto from Japan. "I had never experienced that before. It was new and uncomfortable, but it was a good experience for me to have had."

The participants, chosen by their national conferences, came from Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan. Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) helped provide logistical support.

The team worked alongside volunteer carpenters from the village, sawing, chiseling and putting walls in place for three first-grade classrooms. AMC, a fellowship of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ conferences in Asia and Australia, and MCC agreed to match money the village raised on its own for the project.

Each day village women brought snacks, and work camp participants were invited into several homes to visit over coconut milk.

"We could fellowship together, laugh together and have a friendship together despite the different language," says Gerald Neufeld from Japan.

After returning to Phnom Penh, the team worked at the only interdenominational Bible school in the country. To gain a better understanding of the Cambodian Christian Church, the team met for worship and recreation with the Church of Peace in Christ, which had been planted by EMM.

"We all worked hard together until we were very tired," says Ia Phoung, a Cambodian who joined in several of the team's activities. "But we still made time each day to sing and worship the Lord."

To increase their understanding of Asian cultures and Mennonite life, a different team member shared each evening about the culture and the church of his or her country. "Participating in the work camp helped me broaden my understanding and exposure to Mennonites from around Asia," says Gabriel Chew Heng Siah from Singapore.

"I feel changed by the experiences and people I met in Cambodia," says Hesper Huerta from the Philippines. "God showed me the way he works and how he is preparing me for his work in the future."

The camps were started in 1965 by MCC worker Karl Beck, who wanted to foster relations between Japanese and Koreans.—*Jennette Claassen and J. Allen Brubaker for EMM and MCC news services*

AMBS window

Associated
Mennonite
Biblical
Seminary

Focus

Listening to others' stories

Robert E. Yoder

Even though it has been several weeks since I returned from the Global Urbanization and Mission study seminar in India and Thailand in January, I continue to unpack this rich experience. Why did I participate in this course? How did I expect it to enrich my future ministry? Though I enjoy traveling and knew this would be a unique way to take an AMBS class, I did not expect "pleasure" to be the defining experience for me.

The experience of meeting people in a different culture was the goal in participating in the study tour to India and Thailand; opportunities to sites such as Agra Fort in Agra, India, were added benefits.

I believe that every time I place myself outside my comfort zone or in a different culture, there is opportunity for me to stretch myself and learn. Having been a pastor and working in camp ministry for several years prior to attending AMBS, I knew that many of my ministry events were anything but "the expected." I learned quickly that the "perfect parishioner" was probably dreamed up by some fairy tale author, and the "camp-without-a-hitch" notion was as likely as me winning the Tour de France.

It was in those times of the unexpected that I relied on my experiences to help me be a more effective minister. My first cross-cultural experience was when I studied in the Middle East with Eastern Mennonite University. Hearing complex stories, seeing different faces, and grappling with diverse and confusing idealogies of the Middle East better prepared me for what I would face in my pastorate. There were many times as a pastor that I drew wisdom from that life-changing endeavor.

My cross-cultural experience challenged me to listen to people's stories, rather than assume my take on any situation was the correct and wholistically-understood one. I discovered that if I truly wanted to minister to people, I needed to listen to their stories. Listening to situations that were foreign to me and reaching out to faces that were so different from what I was used to became vital and essential pastoral responsibilities for me.

I went to India so that I could see the face of God through a people with whom I was unfamiliar. I knew that recognizing and identifying God at work there would help me to see God in my own North American setting. Listening to and grappling with people's stories of a context foreign to me would help me be a better listener and grappler with people who are my geographic neighbors. In going to India I knew that I would be stretched. My personal hope is that I will now continue to grow from this venture in ways that will not only make me a better person, but also enable me to better serve and minister—particularly when the unexpected occurs.

Robert E. Yoder is an AMBS student from Somerset, Pa.

Inside

Ministry in Chicago: Breaking bread in the city

More on India-Thailand study tour: Ministry is an act of love

Cross-cultural learning close to home

Breaking bread in the city

Anna-Lisa Salo

Chicago, bastion of wealth, power and prestige. Gleaming skyscrapers laugh at God and challenge the heavens, masking the reality hidden in their shadows. For a short time, I explored one of these shadowy sections through a field-based program offered by Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary called Women, Ministry and the City. The course which I participated in during the summer of 1999 combined field experience in an urban center with lectures and discussion on relevant topics such as racism, gentrification, poverty, substance abuse and mental illness.

My immersion into urban ministry incorporated three different settings, a church, a soup kitchen and a women's shelter. One of my most rewarding experiences was serving as a chaplain in the Good News Community Kitchen, which responds to the demand for emergency food assistance by serving one meal daily, 365 days a year. No other food service agency in Chicago can claim this kind of dedication.

Each day people would arrive at this site from the Four Corners of the city. Men, women and children gathered to break bread together. While waiting for the doors to open, some, in defiance of the rules, smoked, cursed and blocked pedestrian traffic—acts of power by the powerless and oppressed. Others numbed by drugs, booze or life in general waited passively in the sweltering city heat.

Initially, I saw nothing but a weary, desperate mass of humanity. However, Jesus challenged me to "Look again," and I was amazed by what I saw. Once inside the artificial cool of the dining hall, these wilted souls revived. Before my eyes a community gathered, bound together by the struggle to survive. I heard laughter, witnessed people saving seats for their friends and portions of their own meal for those who couldn't make it to the kitchen. It became clear that, regardless of the location, a soup kitchen, suburban home or sanctuary, breaking bread together is a sacred event. Where there is intimacy, fellowship and mutual caring, God is present. I took my place among these people and broke bread with them; hard, stale, day-old bread, that no one else wanted.

Anna-Lisa Salo is an AMBS student from Lively, Ont.

GOOD NEWS CHURCH

The Good News Church in Chicago was one settings where Anna-Lisa Salo worked during the summer of 1999 in the program, "Women, Ministry and the City." In addition to this program sponsored by Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary, AMBS students can participate in SCUPE (Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education), in Chicago.

Members of the India-Thailand study tour pose in front of Agra Fort, Agra, India: Adam Robinson, Raul Bogoya, Eric Boschmann (at back), Theo Odhiambo, John McPhee, Art McPhee, Evie McPhee, Richard Fashbaugh, Bob Yoder, Pamela Bressler, Randy Culp, Wayne Mark Thomas, and Melody Steinmann. Art McPhee, AMBS assistant professor of mission and evangelism, was the tour leader.

What does it mean to work with "poorest of the poor"

Ministry is a task of love

Néstor Raúl Bogoya

The city of Calcutta in India is well known for the work done by Mother Theresa. I always wanted to know why Mother Theresa wanted to work with the "poorest of the poor," and what that means, to work with the "poorest of the poor." There are people in the world who are poor not only in the sense of a lack of basic needs, but poor can also mean lacking friends to be with, people to talk to or look at or die with.

I think that I now understand this somewhat. We had the opportunity to volunteer at one of the locations where the Sisters of Charity work. We started with a worship service at six in the morning to prepare us spiritually for the demands of the day.

Then we headed to the place where we were going to work. One of our tasks was to help the patients dress themselves. While we were helping them, I had the most overwhelming experience of my life. A couple of us were dressing a man of about 50—perhaps 30—I do not know. I noticed this man was very cold. His mouth was white; he was mumbling and in a lot of pain while we were moving him. The face of this man stuck in my mind—I kept thinking about him as I was helping others. I went back just to be with him, but when I reached him, I touched him and he was not breathing and he did not have a pulse. He was dead.

Here I was with a man whose past I did not know. I did not know if he had a family, or anything else about him. All I knew was that he was a human being just like me, that he was God's creation and that the intention of God for this man was the same intention God had for me... life. After they took away his body, I went to help people do some laundry and while I was doing it, I saw this man's clothes. I washed them, but I was hit by an overwhelming realization—there were others waiting to wear these same clothes.

For Raúl Bogoya, participating in the study tour to India and Thailand gave him opportunties to compare three cultures, discovering that the "poorest of the poor"can be found in all. While in Calcutta, the group visited a shelter for people with mental handicaps, in addition to volunteering with the Sisters of Charity.

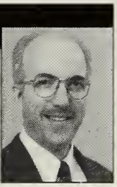
In today's world the gap between the rich and poor is greater than ever. I had to ask myself, what is the task of the church in our world today? Perhaps as church leaders and lay people we will hear stories of people like this more each day. There is no need to go to these places to recognize this truth (although I think that for some people it is good to have this kind of experience just to awaken certain feelings and to see the truth from another perspective).

Jesus was very aware of the poorest of the poor in his time. He confronted people all the time because they discriminated against those who were sick and poor, because they discriminated against women and children. Jesus was talking about "poorest of the poor" when he said: "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to the least of these, you did not do it to me." Perhaps this is the message we need here today in the church. That man in Calcutta reminded me of Jesus.

India taught me that ministry is a task of love, loving my neighbor as myself. In the North American society, it is very easy to be isolated as well as forget who my neighbor is. The poorest of the poor are out there. Maybe it is our neighbor. Open our eyes and we will see.

N. Raúl Bogoya is an AMBS student from Leamington, Ontario. He grew up in Colombia.

President's Window



Party Hardy and Speak the Gospel

"Birthday parties in America amaze me," said Stefanus Haryono, an AMBS student from Indonesia. "I've been to several, *and no one even prayed for the person who had the birthday!* When Mennonites in Indonesia have a party, someone prays and preaches a *sermon!*" Stefanus laughed at this, but he was making a serious point. "There usually are some people there who don't know Jesus, and it's a time to share the gospel."

More than six hundred church buildings in Indonesia have been destroyed by mob violence since 1967. "On the first Sunday after a church building is destroyed," Stefanus said, "believers from that congregation gather at the ruins to worship and to say 'we are still here.'" In the midst of violent opposition, Stefanus and other Mennonite leaders placed pictures from the *Martyrs Mirror* on the walls of Mennonite church buildings. They wanted fellow Mennonites to draw strength from their Anabaptist heritage.

Just as Stefanus found inspiration in Anabaptist roots, Mennonites in North America should continue to learn from churches around the world. I'm not sure I'll arrange a sermon for my next birthday party, but I admire the conviction and testimony of Mennonites in Indonesia. They inspire me to find settings here where it is appropriate to speak my faith.

From its beginning AMBS has been a binational (Canadian and US) and international seminary. Presently we have students from sixteen countries. Such a mix is more valuable than ever at a time when "re-tribalization" threatens to fragment the world into political and cultural splinters. Church leaders in particular need a global perspective.

How do Christian sisters and brothers in other cultures read the Bible? Witness? Worship? Instruct new believers? Share financial resources? AMBS will continue to work on these questions both by sending students and faculty into other cultures, and by making this campus a place where people of many backgrounds meet to discern the way of Jesus together.

- J. Nelson Kraybill

Coming this fall:

Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology

A semi-annual journal published by the Institute of Mennonite Studies at AMBS and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man.

Published for pastors, congregational leaders, conference leaders, mission and service workers, educators, church members. Developed to help church leaders reflect theologically on the identity, mission and practices of the church.

AMBS Panorama

Summer continuing education events

AMBS will host three continuing education events this summer:

- Planning Rituals for Worship, with June Alliman Yoder and Marlene Kropf on May 30;
- Natural Church Development, with Antonio Ulloa and Art McPhee on June 24; and
- Pastoral Counseling in Context, with Daniel Schipani, Mesach Krisetya, and Lies B. van der Zee, August 4-5.

For more information, contact the AMBS continuing education office, 219 296-6207 or bsawatzky@ambs.edu.

Available on the web site

Several resources for church leaders are available at www.ambs.edu:

- Commentaries by AMBS faculty on the lectionary readings for Lent;
- Papers presented at "Without Spot or Wrinkle," a conference on ecclesiology sponsored by the Institute of Mennonite Studies in February;
- Continuing Education offerings;
- Distance education resources for pastors who do not have a bachelor's degree.

Nelson Kraybill (second from right) and two AMBS students appeared on WNIT-TV, the Elkhart public television station, on Feb. 27. The segment featured cross-cultural learning opportunities on campus, in Elkhart, in Chicago, and around the world. The two students, on the left, were Adam Robinson, from Calgary, Alb., and Esther Maddimadugu from Hyberabad, India. AMBS currently has 14 students from Canada, and 15 students from 14 countries outside of North America.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Canadian Mennonite and The Mennonite.

Spring 2000

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MBCM president named magazine editor

Everett J. Thomas, president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM) for the past 11 years, has been named next editor of *The Mennonite,* effective Nov. 1. He will succeed J. Lorne Peachey, the magazine's first editor, who will step down this summer.

"Everett Thomas loves the church and lives to serve God through it," says Cheryl Zehr Walker, chair of the Interim Periodical Board (IPB), which oversees the magazine and made the appointment. "He is an eloquent communicator and a caring administrator."

IPB and search committee members say they were attracted to Thomas' management abilities and experience, particularly at this time in the creation of a new church out of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

"With the uncertainties that still exist in forming Mennonite Church USA, Everett Thomas brings with him a knowledge of the transformation process and a commitment to see the transformation through," says Cleon Claassen, a member of the search committee and of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board. "His vision for the new church and his leadership, management and pastoral skills will be invaluable to the editor position as we travel through transformation."

The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board affirmed Thomas' appointment.

"As the church changes, the magazine will change," Thomas says. "I hope that every year *The Mennonite* will be an increasingly faithful expression of what we are becoming as Mennonite Church USA."

After 15 years as a teacher and administrator at Bethany Christian High School in Goshen, Ind., Thomas arrived at MBCM, Elkhart, in 1989 and proceeded to revitalize the struggling agency. As MBCM president, he has been active in GC-MC transformation, leading staff, working on ministerial leadership, young adult and youth conventions, and congregational ministries in worship, evangelism and stewardship. He edited the 1996 "A Mennonite Polity for Ministerial Leadership," used by the integrating church.

Thomas is also an advocate of the Damascus Road anti-racism project. "He will work hard at giving people of color adequate voice in the magazine," says search committee member Jane Hoober Peifer, who is also a member of the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board.

Thomas will continue to live in Goshen, Ind., while supervising magazine operations in Newton, Kan., and Scottdale, Pa.

He graduated from Goshen College in 1972 with a degree in English and earned a master of divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, in 1998. He was ordained by Indiana-Michigan Conference in 1990. Thomas and his wife, Barbara, are members of College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

He has held communication responsibilities at both Bethany and MBCM and has had articles published in *The Mennonite* as well as in its predecessor publications, *Gospel Herald* and *The Mennonite.*

"The editor is first a journalist and privileged to have a point of view semi-independent from the formal church structures," Thomas says. "At the same time, the editor is also expected to help lead the church by providing the timely prophetic or pastoral word. It is to these dual roles that I sense God's call on my life for the next years."

Peachey, *The Mennonite*'s founding editor, will take a joint marketing position with Pennsylvania Mennonite Federal Credit Union and Sharing Programs of Lancaster Conference, working out of Scottdale. Prior to *The Mennonite*'s inception more than two years ago, he had been *Gospel Herald* editor for seven years. He was also founding editor of *With* magazine and had edited *Christian Living.*

"Lorne's experience in Mennonite journalism is unique," Walker says. "He has been a source of wisdom and illumination. We will miss him and wish him God's blessing in his next challenge."

Thomas

Jim Bishop

Piecing it together

Mark Hogan, education professor at Eastern Mennonite University, adds another paper block to a "quilt" during a fund-raising dinner at the Harrisonburg, Va., school last month. Each block represents a $15 pledge for the EMU Student-Initiated Endowment Fund. The evening generated $5,000 for the fund, which was started by EMU students concerned that not enough money was going to need-based student aid. Dinah Hoover, a new, second-semester student from Weston, W.Va., is the fund's first scholarship recipient.

From radio waves to Internet web sites

Retired administrator saw communication changes

HARRISONBURG, Va.—When Ken Weaver joined Mennonite Board of Missions' (MBM) Mennonite Broadcasts Inc. in 1956, the well-known *Mennonite Hour* radio program was only five years old.

Much has changed since then. Mennonite Broadcasts is now known as MBM Mennonite Media. *The Mennonite Hour* is no longer aired. The Internet has become the latest frontier in Christian communication.

And Ken Weaver is retired.

He stepped down last year as Mennonite Media director, concluding 43 years of working with production and distribution of media materials as a mission outreach for Mennonite congregations. Weaver, 68, was honored at a March 23 celebration in Harrisonburg, commemorating his contributions.

After starting with radio ministries, Mennonite Media's efforts today include a web site, public-service radio and TV spots, a syndicated newspaper column and videos.

In a presentation at a communications conference last year, Weaver compared current communication methods to those used by the 16th-century Anabaptists.

Weaver

"One of the things that caused the Anabaptist movement ... to be so explosive was the invention of the movable type printing press of the day," he said. "They used the new print medium, tracts and brochures to get their message out beyond what they could do in person."

Likewise today, he said, Mennonites need to use advances in communication technology to expand the reach of the gospel.—*MBM News Service*

Clarification: Abigail Smith was the first worker in a wheelchair to serve with the integrated Mennonite Voluntary Service, as reported in the March 21 issue. But another worker in a wheelchair served in Puerto Rico in the 1960s with Mennonite Board of Missions' Voluntary Service program.

Correction: Dale Stoltzfus of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries spoke at a consultation on pastoral ministry at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. He was misidentified in the March 21 issue.

You are invited to an evening of fellowship and inspiration

as we seek our future together as God's transformed people in Mennonite Church USA.
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Mennonite Church USA

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- learn about plans for transformation
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- hear a sermon on "making all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

29 churchwide gatherings are planned throughout the United States, March-June 2000. Join the celebration for the church God is forming among us!

April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA. Speaker–John C. Murray
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN. Speaker–Diane Zaerr
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL. Speaker–Janeen Bertsche Johnson
April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FL. Speaker–Bernie Wiebe
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK. Speaker–Duane Beck
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA. Speaker–Dwight McFadden, Jr.

For more information contact Shelley Buller 316-283-5100 ext. 249
or e-mail ShelleyB@gcmc.org

March 5, First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS.
March 12, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, PA.
March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA.
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson. NB,
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN.
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX.
March 26, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN.

April 2, Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA.
April 2, Norristown New Life Mennonite Church, Norristown, PA.
April 2, Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, PA.
April 2, Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, D.C.
April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA.
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN.
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL.
April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FL.
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK.
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA.

May 5-7, First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO. (RMMC annual sessions)
May 7, First Mennonite Church, Morton, IL.
May 7, Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH.
May 14, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, OH.
May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA.
May 21, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA.

June 4, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD.
June 8-11, Casselton Mennonite Church, Casselton, ND. (NCC annual sessions)
June 11, Community Mennonite Fellowship, Corning, NY.
June 22-23, Moses Lake High School, Moses Lake, WA. (PNMC annual sessions)
June 24, First Mennonite, Reedley, CA. (PSMC annual sessions)

Giving to MBM up for third consecutive year

ELKHART, Ind.—Contributions to Mennonite Board of Missions during the 1999 fiscal year reached nearly $6.5 million—the third consecutive year of increased giving. Contributions accounted for 86 percent of MBM's $7.1 million operating budget.

Congregations gave nearly $4 million, up 2 percent from 1998. MBM also received more than $600,000 in estates and nearly $340,000 from businesses.

Several programs experienced significant increases in the past year. Participation doubled at the Great Lakes Discipleship Center in Fort Wayne, Ind., and Mennonite Voluntary Service saw a 10 percent increase in workers. A new Service Adventure Unit opened in Lebanon, Ore., bringing the number of units to 11.

"We rejoice that our Mennonite congregations and constituents are thinking of a broken world beyond ourselves," says MBM president Stanley Green.—*MBM News Service*

New program links Francophone Mennonites

WINNIPEG—A group of French-speaking Mennonite youth from three continents recently did a whirlwind tour of southern Manitoba, connecting with a little-known Francophone community outside of Quebec.

They are participants in Harmonie, a new program of Mennonite Central Committee Quebec that brings French-speaking Mennonite youth from Europe, Africa and North America to live and work in Montreal for nine months.

"We're trying to create a sense of belonging among French-speaking Mennonites," says program coordinator Scott Knarr. "It's a way of showing others that there are people in the world who speak French and are Mennonites, that all Mennonites don't speak German and eat borscht."

The five Harmonie participants are from Burkina Faso, France and Manitoba. While in Manitoba, they participated at a number of Mennonite schools and community events and appeared on the local French public radio station.—*MCC Canada News Service*

MBM, MCC responding to Mongolian disaster

ELKHART, Ind.—As Mongolia faces the potential loss of 7 percent of its livestock, Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) are responding to the disaster in the primarily agrarian society.

MCC has sent $10,000 in assistance, and MBM has authorized $3,900. Both agencies are appealing for more funds.

"Mongolia is experiencing the worst snow-related disaster it has seen in the past 30 years," says Paul Kline, executive director of JCS International, a coalition of 15 mission organizations, including MBM, working in the predominantly Buddhist country. "Severe drought conditions last summer, combined with unusually heavy and early snowfalls this winter, have combined to create a very difficult situation for many of Mongolia's livestock."

More than 1 million animals have already died, affecting 316,000 people. Kline said total losses could exceed 2 million animals.
—GCMC, MBM and MCC news services

Some MCC workers pass through, others stay

AKRON, Pa.—For many Mennonite Central Committee service workers, MCC headquarters in Akron is just a short stop on the way to their assignments in far-off locations. But Akron has been the final destination for the 37 members of the local service unit.

Unit members come from six countries: Croatia, Germany, Paraguay and Switzerland as well as the United States and Canada. The assignments are varied, from working in the Ten Thousand Villages warehouse to keeping MCC headquarters computers functional. Germans Ben Sander and Sebastian Schulze spend half their assignments outside of Akron. Their assignment is with MCC's portable meat canner, which annually spends six months on the road.—*MCC News Service*

by the way ...

In the first three months of this year, 746 people have served at seven Mennonite Disaster Service project sites.—*MDS News*

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Births

Cardona, Alana Marie, March 15, to Janeen (Frankenfield) and Rick Cardona, Sellersville, Pa.

Cossick, Kurt Ryan, March 10, to Andrew and Rhonda (Showalter) Cossick, Wadsworth, Ohio.

Derstine Jr., Justin Wade, March 13, to Justin Wade and Shannon (Housel) Derstine, Mertztown, Pa.

Heyerly, Jacob Ryan, Feb. 10, to Kathy (Riegsecker) and Phil Heyerly, Shipshewana, Ind.

Kratz, Cody Johnson, March 2, to Jennifer (Derstine) and Rick Kratz, Telford, Pa.

Miller, Owen Benjamin, March 9, to Keith and Rebekah (Hershey) Miller, Ronks, Pa.

Myers, Corin Elias, March 13, to Gary and Joleen (Miller) Myers, Harrisonburg, Va.

Pugh, Morgan Marie, Feb. 10, to Cathy (Yoder) and Eric Pugh, Louisville, Ohio.

Roth, Matthew James, March 6, to Sarah and Tyler Roth, Goshen, Ind.

Sears, Jessica Marie, March 12, to Janis (Beck) and Jeff Sears, Tiskilwa, Ill.

Souder, Micah Ryan, March 4, to Lisa Anders and Devin Souder, Souderton, Pa.

Stauffer, Brianna, Feb. 9, to Lavern and Tonya Stauffer, Tallmadge, Ohio.

Stutzman, Katie Bryn, March 15, to Benjamin and Katrina (Derstine) Stutzman, Perkasie, Pa.

Sullivan, Blake Raymond, Feb. 8, to Richard and Suzanne (Friesen) Sullivan, Miami.

Trissel, Clayton Mathew, March 1, to Christen (Sauder) and Jason Trissel, Indianapolis.

Waltner, Stephen Michael, March 1, to Don and Sonja (Olson) Waltner, Freeman. S.D.

Weaver, Chloe Elizabeth, Feb. 10, to Andrea and Dean Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Deaths

Abel, Virgie, 86, Lancaster, Pa., died Jan. 24. Spouse: William Abel (deceased). Survivors: children George, Robert; two grandchildren. Funeral: Jan. 26 at New Holland, Pa.

Bergey, Anna, 79, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 4. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Frederick (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Grieser, Galen, 94, Archbold, Ohio, died March 7. Spouse: Ada Rupp Grieser (deceased). Parents: Edward and Aldina Vonier Grieser (deceased). Survivors: children Geneva Good, Richard, J.R., Wauneta Meller, Linda Vasvery, Diane Nafziger; 22 grandchildren; 32 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: March 10 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Gross, Ruth Fliginger, 91, Freeman, S.D., died Feb. 9. Spouse: Alfred Gross. Parents: Peter and Minnie Downer Fliginger (deceased). Other survivors: children Don, Darrol; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 12 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Hershey, Irene, 79, Leacock Township, Pa., died Feb. 25. Parents: Aldus and Ida Wenger Hershey (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 28 at Hershey Mennonite Church, Kinzers, Pa.

Jantz, Daniel, 89, Spokane, Wash., died Feb. 22. Spouse: Martha Waltner Jantz (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Rosena Miller Jantz (deceased). Survivors: children Carol Holter, Shirley Goldberger, Brenda Olson, Joyce Matlocks, Clifford, Jerry, Dewayne; six grandchildren; four stepgrandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 26 at Spokane.

Kauffman, Bertha Lehman, 87, Middlebury, Ind., died Feb. 26. Spouse: Cloyd Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Martin and Mabel Berkey Lehman (deceased). Survivors: children Don, Tom, Chester; 27 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 29 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Kaufman, Vernon, 82, Topeka, Ind., died Feb. 22. Spouse: Mary Dintaman Kaufman. Parents: Milton and Effie Hostetler Kaufman (deceased). Other survivors: children Ronald, Bonnie Schultz, Roger, Birdena Ringenberg; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 26 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Martin, Anna, 97, Lititz, Pa., died Jan. 31. Spouse: Aaron Martin (deceased). Parents: David and Francis Martin (deceased). Survivors: Evelyn Groff, Erma, Mildred Leaman; 15 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 2 at New Holland, Pa.

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- **Wanted:** Part-time ***pastor*** for urban Mennonite church in Knoxville, Tenn. Please contact our overseer, Ed Godshall, at 704-462-1707.

- **Community Mennonite Church** of Lancaster is seeking a ***pastor*** beginning November 2000. Our congregation is an active one of approximately 250. Candidates must have a deep commitment to Anabaptist beliefs and a passion for peace and justice. Send resume to Mary Jane Fox, 43 Clover Lane, Palmyra, PA 17078; 717-838-6963; email millerfox@supernet.com

- **Christopher Dock High School** seeks applicants for the following positions for the 2000-2001 school year: ***social studies teacher, English teacher, chemistry teacher, biology teacher***. Send resume to Elaine A. Moyer, Principal, Christopher Dock Mennonite High School, 1000 Forty Foot Road, Lansdale, PA 19446.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School,** 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, seeks a full-time ***physical, health and driver education*** teacher for grades 6-12. Applicant shall demonstrate effective teaching skills, integration of faith into the classroom, with a commitment to the Mennonite Church Confession of Faith. Fax resumes to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528. Application processing will begin April 1.

Metzler, Alta Maust, 94, Goshen, Ind., died March 11. Spouse: A.J. Metzler (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Anne Baker Maust (deceased). Survivors: children Alice Roth, Dorothy Brunk, Joyce Hostetler, Carl, Edgar, Jay; 19 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 14 at Greencroft Meetinghouse, Goshen.

Miller, Paul Willis, 96, Fairview, Mich., died March 3 of heart failure. Spouse: (1st) Barbara Yoder Miller (deceased); (2nd) Lina Kauffman Snyder Miller (deceased). Parents: Obed and Ella May Yoder Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, James, Duane, Lois Summer, Mary Summer; stepchildren: Harold Snyder, Delbert Snyder, Ivan Snyder; eight grandchildren; five stepgrandchildren; two great-grandchildren; four step-great-grandchildren. Burial at Glenns Ferry, Idaho.

Moyer, Elwyn, 83, Souderton, Pa., died Feb. 23. Spouse: Margaret Heebner Moyer. Parents: Erwin and Anna Overholt Moyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Fern Derstine, Elaine Souder, Sylvia Derstine, Judy Kolb, Harleigh, Bruce; 22 grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren; six step-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Feb. 28 at Rockhill Mennonite Church, Telford, Pa.

Ratzlaff, Mary Krehbiel, 87, Buhler, Kan., died March 18. Spouse: Arnold Ratzlaff (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Regina Schrag Krehbiel (deceased). Survivors: children Kenneth, Gerald, Nancy Schmidt, Betty Gehring, Ruth Gehring; 15 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 21 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Robinson, William, 78, Massillon, Ohio, died March 2 of a heart attack. Spouse: June Hatfield Robinson. Parents: Isaac and Dora Robinson (deceased). Other survivors: children William, John; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 7 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, North Lawrence, Ohio.

Shelly, Kathryn, 92, Bristol, Pa., died Feb. 24 of cardiovascular disease. Parents: Elwood and Katie Rickert Shelly (deceased). Memorial service: March 5 at Hereford Mennonite Church, Bally, Pa.

Stutzman, Harry Eason, 78, Beemer, Neb., died March 2 of cardiac arrest. Spouse: Millie Bellar Stutzman. Parents: Ed and Lydia Stutzman (deceased). Other survivors: children Janet Hinkel, Jim, Rita Leirman; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 6 at Beemer Mennonite Church.

- **Called to ministry?** Swamp Mennonite Church in rural southeastern Pennsylvania, one hour north of Philadelphia, seeking full-time ***associate pastor of youth ministries***. Utilize your gifts in our Anabaptist community.

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- **Central Christian School** seeks qualified people for the following positions: ***business manager:*** administrative-level position, experience preferred; ***director of admissions:*** 50 percent position in charge of admissions program; ***director of instrumental music:*** a key faculty position in an excellent, established music program, experience preferred; ***director of preschool***; ***teachers*** for grades K-6.

  Contact Frederic Miller, Principal, Central Christian School, P.O. Box 9, Kidron, OH 44636; 330-857-7311; email ccs_fmiller@tccsa.net

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  For more information, contact Eric Martin, Principal, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000; email Martines@teleport.com

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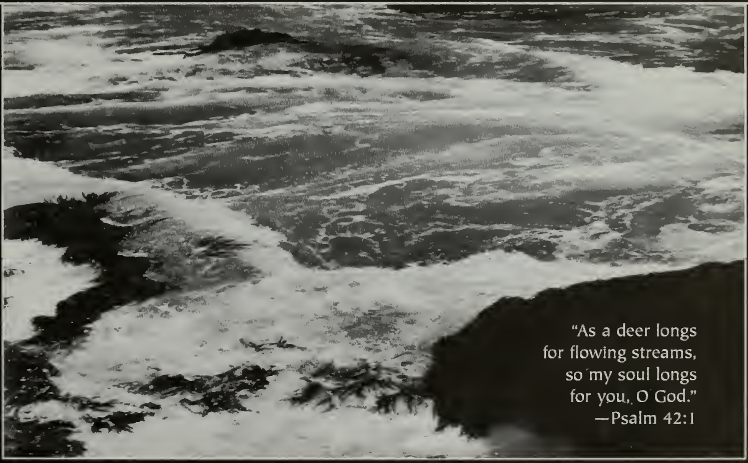

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—Psalm 42:1

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J. Lorne Peachey

A wise vote in the East

These are turbulent times for the church. Disagreements and dissensions within rival any opposition we may experience from without. Yet in this kind of environment the Holy Spirit promoted two Mennonite groups to integrate. When we began working toward unity, we expected some snags; we just weren't sure where and how many.

Today we're discovering quite a few areas in which we have issues to work through. Interestingly enough, these are not so much between the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church as they are within each of our groups.

Major disagreement has surfaced around proposed membership guidelines for the merged denomination. Already accepted by Mennonite Church Canada but not by the new U.S. entity, these guidelines would allow congregations that have been disciplined by an area conference because they accept noncelibate homosexuals as members to be part of the new church, at least at the beginning.

But this is not the only issue around which we disagree. Having women in leadership positions has some conferences and congregations hesitating about joining the new church. So does the fact that membership will be through area conferences and not directly by congregations to the new denomination. How we use and interpret Scripture has others questioning the move toward integration, as does who has final authority to decide all these questions.

As these disagreements become more prominent, there are movements in some area conferences and geographical areas, mostly in the East, not to become part of the new Mennonite Church USA (see story in our March 14 issue).

A first test of this movement came on March 18 at a special session of the Eastern District Conference (EDC). Delegates were called to this session to consider a resolution that would have had the EDC continue "as a fellowship of Mennonite congregations but ... not ... as an area conference with the new Mennonite Church USA". With 48 percent of the delegates voting for and 52 percent voting against, the resolution did not pass (see story in our March 28 issue).

That the EDC will be part of the new church is something for which we should thank God. Any move toward merger that loses an entire conference is not a step toward unity. A Mennonite Church USA without the EDC would have been a great loss, particularly since this district was one that helped bring about the General Conference Mennonite Church.

With its vote, EDC decided not to bolt and go off on its own. It could very well have done so, either starting another organization or joining with a denomination already in existence. Our history as Mennonites is littered with examples of individuals, congregations and sometimes whole groups who have done so. Not only does this give a confusing message to an already confused world, but splinters and splits grieve the heart of Jesus, who continues to pray to God: "that they may be completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me" (John 17:23).

At the same time, the fact that almost half the EDC delegates were ready to take the radical step of not becoming part of Mennonite Church USA cannot be ignored. Dialogue must continue. Unity that comes through one side or the other dominating the discussion and being in control is hollow oneness. The church must take seriously those voices that call for a reassessment of what faithfulness means for us today in relation to many tough issues that we face as Christians.

However, this discernment of the Spirit's way for us cannot happen if groups that differ with each other decide to call it quits and go their own way. For that reason, the EDC vote to continue with the process and become part of the new denomination is to be commended.

Continued discussion and dialogue can become wearisome and tiring. Impatience with the process can set in. Yet, we can persevere with patience and goodwill if we believe that the Spirit who "began a good work among [us] will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6). The alternative would be even more fractures and confusion.

Separation and fissures should not be in our future as Mennonites. The EDC vote kept one from happening. It is a wise move of our sisters and brothers in the East. May it be an example for us all as we become the new Mennonite Church USA.—*jlp*

Discernment of the Spirit's way for the church cannot happen if groups that differ with each other decide to call it quits and go their own way.

the Mennonite

April 11, 2000

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the need for future leaders

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8 Mission groups: decentralize structure
9 Hymnsing for peace in nation's capital
16 When the Pope confesses our sins

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Metaphorically speaking

Howard Zehr appropriately reminds us of the metaphorical nature of theological language and that both male and female metaphors are used for God in Scripture ("God Is Father … and Mother," March 21). Both enrich our understanding of God. But nowhere does the Bible say that God is Mother. It does say God is Father: "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 15:6) and "our God and Father" (Philippians 4:20). Jesus tells us to address God as Father.

To say that God is Mother or to address God as Mother is to drastically alter the revelation of Scripture. God exists eternally in a Father/Son/Spirit relationship. It is true, as Zehr says, that we cannot see or touch God. "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made him known" (John 1:18). God in all his glory remains "a mystery beyond human comprehension," as Zehr says. But the mystery has been made known in the Word made flesh. Unless our language about God remains consistent with that Word of revelation, we invent false images of God. Jesus "is the image of the invisible God" (Colossians 1:15).—*Karl E. Steffy, Manheim, Pa.*

In my many years of experience as a medical social worker and active church member, I have talked with a number of people who have had mothers who were strong and ethical but emotionally distant or strong disciplinarians. In these cases, the mother metaphor may have value but may not be altogether positive. Though studies state that reported incidents of women as the abuser are not nearly as high as those of men as the abuser, there are women and men who were abused by their mother, wife or daughter. For victims of this type of abuse, the association of God as mother may be overwhelmingly negative and painful. What do these people think and feel when they hear God referred to as mother?—*Al Mortenson, Louisville, Ky.*

I am reminded of attending an African-American church and hearing the song "What's the Matter With Jesus?" with the refrain, "He's alright!" Howard Zehr's point is well taken that God is both father and mother. But when he says, "I object to predominantly male language for God," I wonder if he thinks something is the matter with Jesus when he taught us to say when we pray, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name"?—*Wayne D. Lawton, Elizabethtown, Pa.*

Language barriers

Thank you for the article about Abigail Smith ("First Wheelchair-Bound MVSer Rolls On," March 21). I question, though, the use of the term "wheelchair-bound" to describe her. She uses a wheelchair for mobility. It is a freeing tool that allows her to go places, increases opportunities for interaction and service, provided there is accessibility. It is abled-bodied people that see wheelchairs as binding and restrictive instead of the marvelous tool they are. Also, a person using a wheelchair is not glued to the chair but can get out of the chair just like I am not bound to my shoes.

We have a wonderful disability advocate resource in Sheila Stopher Yoder with Mennonite Mutual Aid. I would suggest that her expertise be utilized in writing about people with disabilities. People with disabilities have enough barriers to deal with besides those presented in our language.—*Alonna Gautsche Sprunger, director of congregational resources of Lancaster Conference, Lancaster, Pa.*

Transformation observations

From the time of the Nicene Creed in A.D. 325, Christians have struggled to uphold four classic marks specifying the criteria to be met by the true church: to seek reconciliation and unity, to revere the holy, to strive to include all who confess Christ and to preserve faithful memory of the work of the first apostles. Amid the current division and emerging schism surrounding the formation of Mennonite Church USA, as sides fight for claim to the second and fourth marks, they each appear ready to disregard the first and third. To be a true church, however, will require the aim to satisfy all four of these criteria.

Of course, we may wish to declare the truth impossible to attain and so lower our sights to include only those on our side. But if we are not aiming at becoming the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church, then why bother with the Christian faith at all? If we are not aiming at reconciliation and unity, then why trouble to call ourselves the offspring of Anabaptists?

The first rule of conflict resolution is to understand that the goats are not on the other side. Short of this understanding, our future will consist of being punished not for but by our sins. This punishment will be experienced as disunity, exclusion and the rupture of peace that marks those who forget their heritage and fail to follow the commands of God.—*Gordon Scoville, Broadus, Mont.*

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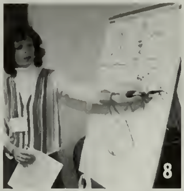

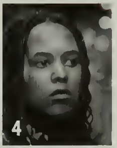

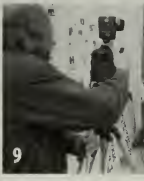

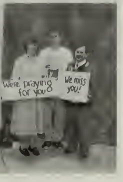

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y readers say

The process of the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church has been fascinating, as has been the analysis of the meaning and direction of the merger itself. One segment of the community that has been curiously and conspicuously silent has been the social scientists. Without consulting any of my colleagues for permission to break the silence, I offer some observations: (1) Organizational structures, including religious ones, operate most effectively when they are the result of existential needs, i.e., when structure follows function. (2) Combining or merging substructures from the top down almost always involves some form of coercion, since it is difficult to solve lower-level regional and historical differences. (3) An organizational ethos that stresses a flat authority structure —i.e., democratic or, in the case of Anabaptism, basically congregational—will probably not be able to pull off a hierarchical restructuring without painful slippage and further divisions. This should help us understand why Anabaptists have always been exceptionally efficient at dividing, splitting and shunning but almost never at uniting or reuniting when imposed from the top.

So can social science help in the issue confronting us? In line with the three principles above, it would seem that merger should be encouraged to come naturally (point 1) and, if it does not, more division will occur (point 3). A look around will show us these principles are operating and that uniting is happening, depending upon regional and historical factors, but never as clean as a top-down approach envisions. For more than a decade, I was a member of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, which to me is a model of how merger does and should be encouraged to happen.—*Calvin Redekop, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Cover photo by Luke Golobitsh

Leaders for the 21st century

Seven distinctive characteristics church leaders will need in the next 100 years

by Stanley W. Green

> In the West, the church's embrace of the cultural value of independence has led it to forget what dependence on the Holy Spirit means.

The need to develop effective leaders is the most critical strategic challenge for churches at the end of the 20th century. Whatever investment we make in leadership development in the early years of this next century will determine the church's ability to fulfill its reason for being. We will need to pay attention to certain distinctives of leaders.

1. Apostolic in calling: For much of the 20th century in the West, pastoral leaders were trained to serve the needs of their local congregations. They were viewed primarily as the paid professionals who provided services on behalf of the church to members of the congregation. Mission work was done by specialists. Even evangelism was the function of an evangelist, who traveled among churches and spoke at special events. In the rest of the world, congregational leadership was trained to be proficient in building congregations that mirrored the character of congregations in the West. Little work was done to equip pastors to lead their congregations in the critical work of making the gospel fit their context.

There was little expectation that the leader would equip his or her congregation for mission beyond the local context. Global mission was not a consideration for the church in the South and the East. Mission was considered the privilege or obligation of the church in the West. The churches outside the West saw themselves as the recipients of mission, which led to ugly dependencies in the East and South. Leaders of the 21st century will need to be trained to nurture an apostolic consciousness in their congregations that helps them see the world as their field of mission and the community across the street as the context of their calling.

2. Missionary in message: The theology and message of 21st-century congregational leaders will center on the gospel of early apostolic Christianity. Their message will not repeat the imported, narrow dogmatic beliefs from the West, shaped during an era of fundamentalist anxieties. Neither will it be the vague inclusive beliefs of the mainline liberal Protestant groups that lost their nerve and passion for mission after the midpoint of this century. And it cannot be the conventional moralism found in most traditional churches, which have little understanding of the power of sin or the power of the gospel.

Leaders in the 21st century must be trained to preach a gospel that takes seriously the extensive impact of sin and evil in our world and the transforming power of God's grace inherent in the gospel of God's Son Jesus Christ, whose death and resurrection liberates the world from sin for new life.

3. Community in orientation: The global economy has brought a consumer mentality marked by a strong tendency toward individualism. This has a negative impact on traditional cultures, which customarily have placed a high value on community and care for others. People everywhere experience the stress of alienation and the breakdown of traditional support systems, whether for young married couples, graying widows and widowers or lonely adolescents.

Leaders for the future must be equipped not simply to enable and equip individuals for obedient discipleship but to lead in community formation that moves toward the biblical ideal of the congregation as a supportive community.

4. Mentors in focus: In the past, training for pastoral leaders assumed the pastor was the primary provider of spiritual services—counseling, prayer ministry, worship leading, preaching, administering of the sacraments. The pastor was paid to do what the congregation wanted done, given the time, energy and gifts of the pastor. The congregation often saw itself as the primary client for the pastor's services.

Pastors in the 21st century will need to be trained to equip others. They will need to give leadership to nurturing a context in which the gifts and callings of every member are fostered and developed. The pastor of the 21st century will need to be a mentor to lay ministers who will function as a ministry team.

5. Ecumenical in their horizons: "Ecumenical," derived from "oikumene" in Greek, literally means the "whole household." It refers to a global, inclusive perspective rather than a parochial, exclusive perspective. Today it is used to define a movement toward the structural integration of different communions, first explored at the 1910 Missionary Conference in Edinburgh and birthed in 1948, when the World Council of Churches was born. I'm using the word in the global sense rather than the limited way it has been used in modern parlance.

Hundreds of partnerships have been developed around the world to fulfill the church's mandate for global evangelization. In the 21st century we will no longer be able to afford to go it alone.

Stewardship of a variety of gifts in the world church, across the denominational spectrum, will require us to collaborate with a variety of partners to fulfil the task and to witness to the unity of the church. Even as we articulate our strongly held convictions, we recognize our need to work with others who name the name of Jesus as Lord. And the world needs to see a united witness by the Christian church.

6. Holistic in commitment: The 20th century has seen a debate between the social gospel movement that began after World War I and the evangelical-fundamentalist movement that came into its own after World War II. Sides divided over whether the church's mandate was primarily to evangelize or to respond with compassion to a suffering humanity.

In the 21st century we will inherit the growing gap between the rich and the poor and the increased suffering as a result of violence, war and the massive dislocation of millions. Furthermore, of the 6 billion people in our world, 1.75 billion have not yet heard or had an opportunity to respond to the good news of Jesus Christ.

This picture means that leaders in the 21st century will need to develop congregations committed to word and deed. Effective and faithful congregations of the 21st century must be able to hold in creative tension an enthusiastic commitment to evangelism and a sincere embrace of justice, peace and the ministry of reconciliation.

7. Spiritual in practice: The modern age of rationalism has allowed little space for an expectation of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the congregation. In the West, the church's embrace of the cultural value of independence has led it to forget what dependence on the Holy Spirit means. In most churches, little time is given for waiting on the Holy Spirit. This is directly opposed to the witness of the early church. Even a cursory reading of the book of Acts shows that the Holy Spirit is the primary actor in the advance of the early church beyond Jerusalem to Antioch, with its minority Jewish community, and then to Asia Minor, with its overwhelming Gentile majority, and finally to the center of the empire in Rome.

The history of the church's phenomenal advance in the second half of the 20th century, particularly in places where missionaries were not allowed, such as China and Ethiopia, is profound testimony to the power and energy of the Holy Spirit in advancing the gospel despite severe restrictions and limited resources.

In our postmodern climate of vague spirituality, the church needs leaders who believe in the power and energy of the Holy Spirit rather than the next new program to create health and growth in the life of the congregation. The church of the 21st century will require leaders whose primary task is to help congregations to create space for the Holy Spirit and believe that as they risk dependence on God, health will follow.

At the formation of the church Jesus took a ragtag bunch of ill-equipped followers and for three years developed them according to the distinctives described above. The opportunity and challenge of the next century is to dare to emulate the example of Jesus.

Stanley W. Green, Goshen, Ind., is president of Mennonite Board of Missions. This article is based on a talk at a 30th anniversary celebration of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, sponsored by the Jesus Village Church, Chonchun, Korea.

Leaders of the 21st century will need to be trained to nurture an apostolic consciousness in their congregations that helps them see the world as their field of mission and the community across the street as the context of their calling.

Giving up and gaining more

Five pluses of saying yes to a call to pastoral ministry

by Palmer Becker

Jesus began his ministry by recruiting disciples. He first recruited Peter and Andrew, then James and John. Matthew 19:16-30 tells about another man whom Jesus called into the ministry. But this man turned down the invitation.

The rich young ruler: This man was a good prospect. He was among the brightest and the best. He took the initiative to come to Jesus. He was a learner. "Teacher," he said, "what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

He was a good man. He had honored his father and mother. He had not stolen anything or told lies about people. He had loved his neighbors as himself. He had never even thought of murder or committing adultery.

"What more do I need to do?" he asked. "I have given up all the traditional vices, what more do I need to give up?"

Some people give up meat during Lent, at least on Fridays. Others give up smoking or some other vice. Jesus asked this young man to give up more than sweets or a few bad practices. He asked him to give up his vocation and his assets. Jesus said, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come follow me" (verse 21). I can understand why he was hesitant.

The cost of ministry: When I was 19, I struggled with a call to ministry. I had always thought of myself as a farmer. We had 22 Holstein dairy cows, 40 Hampshire hogs and 560 acres of land to farm. I had taken every ag course they offered at Marion (S.D.) High School, got my State Farmer Degree in Future Farmers of America and entered a public speaking contest with the speech, "Why I want to be a farmer."

But then I was given an opportunity to lead in youth fellowship, to teach in Sunday school and to give a short talk in church. Later, at Freeman (S.D.) Junior College, I was invited to preach a sermon in a country church 50 miles away.

My favorite uncle heard me. After the service, he put his hand on my shoulder and asked, "Palmer, when are you going to stop feeding pigs and start feeding people?"

All of us are called to ministry. When I grew up, vocational choice was much easier. In our small farming community, you either became a full-time Christian worker or you became a farmer so that you could support one.

The real question for the rich young ruler was what he would do with his life. Jesus challenged him to give up something so that he could gain and give even more.

In my work I invite people to consider the pastoral ministry. If they are young, I encourage them to finish college and go on to the seminary. I had a good experience there.

But if they are older, and going to four years of college and three years of seminary is not feasible, I offer them another option. The Pastoral Ministries Program I direct at Hesston (Kan.) College is aimed toward nontraditional students. There are many 30- and 40-year-olds who experience a call to ministry later in life; or only get around to answering it in later life.

But many, like the young man in the story, ask, "Who would ever want to give up his or her current work to be a preacher?"

I've heard that question asked in at least five ways:

1. Who would ever want to get up and preach every Sunday?
2. Who would ever want to be on call 24 hours a day every day?
3. Who would want to live in a glass house?
4. Who would ever want to get called on week after week or month after month to visit people at the worst times of life?
5. Who would ever want to take a job where it seems you get criticized for almost everything you do?

On the other hand, here are five pluses of saying yes to pastoral ministry:

1. It's a calling. In one sense, God calls everyone. But it seems God invites some people to a special task. Jesus invited the young man in the story to become a disciple. He used the same words to call Peter and James and John: "Come follow me." But the young man turned it down.

The cost of turning down God's first choice for his life was high. We never hear of this young man again. I have a hunch he lived out his life in a pretty uninteresting way because he wasn't fulfilling what God had created him to be and do.

If God calls you, you can know it is the best for you. God never asks us to do something intended to hurt or ruin us. And God also provides the resources to do the job.

> If God calls you, you can know it is the best for you. God never asks us to do something intended to hurt or ruin us. And God also provides the resources to do the job.

2. It fills a need. Not long ago, I received a notice from our conference's Ministerial Leadership Services that there are currently 126 openings for pastors in the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. Of these, 71 are full-time, 43 part-time, 12 for youth or associate pastors. We need 80 new pastors for our Mennonite churches every year.

3. It's a privilege. It's a privilege to be a pastor because people invite you into the most sacred and crucial times of their lives. You get to be there to dedicate a child, witness a commitment to Christ, conduct a baptism, help two young people begin a good marriage or be one of the first on the scene if things are not going well. A counselor once told me, "You pastors are so fortunate. We have to wait until people come to us. Usually they wait too long. Things have deteriorated too far. You, on the other hand, get to come in at the beginning of a life, a commitment, a marriage or a difficulty in that marriage."

4. It is a challenge. There have been a number of times in our ministry when Ardys and I have wept bitter tears. There have been times when I wanted to quit. There have been times when I said, "This challenge is too great for me." Or it is too great for my family.

But there is another side to it. A greater percentage of preachers' kids are listed in *Who's Who in America* than children of any other vocation.

5. It's rewarding. Let me share one example. Several years ago, a woman said to me, "I've had it. My husband came home drunk again. He broke up the house, threw a lamp against the wall. He threatened the boys and clobbered their self-esteem."

Her husband was critical of everyone and everything, especially of his wife and children. I had the opportunity to work with him. God was already at work in him. One night he fell to his knees and poured out his heart to God. I helped him face his critical nature and overcome it. Slowly things changed.

One Sunday after church the couple came forward and repeated a new, thoughtful set of vows to each other. They gave each other new wedding rings. They went on a new honeymoon. And when they came home, they started having devotions together and eating family meals together.

A pastor is a shepherd, someone who loves people, cares for people, helps them when they're hurt, feeds them when they're hungry.

Nothing comes easy. Life didn't come easy for Jesus. He gave up his life. Life would not have been easy for the rich young ruler. But giving up something of lesser value is the way to gain and give more. Jesus said, "Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30).

Palmer Becker is director of the pastoral ministries program at Hesston (Kan.) College.

Lenten reflections

Keeping the message alive

by Eric Timar

When I was in Catholic grade school back in Ohio, we spent part of Good Friday at Mass demanding the release of Barabbas. The reading from the Gospel of Matthew was divided into parts, and while one reader stood on the altar speaking the reasonable words of Pilate, exhorting the Jews to have mercy on Jesus, we in the congregation read the part of the rabble: "Crucify him!" The priest would wrap up the reading by telling us that, once again, the mob won and Pilate handed Jesus over to die.

I never liked this and refused to join in. I had seen enough Westerns to know that when the innocent man was sent to the gallows, the people in the crowd were supposed to charge in on a horse and rescue him. I believed that the mob had indeed freed Barabbas, but I knew I would not have been one of them. I struggled with peer pressure like anyone else, but I wasn't about to crucify the Lord.

The nuns who taught at the school never went deeply into the theology of the drama. We were supposed to understand we were sinners and Christ was making a sacrifice for us just as he was for the crowd.

I wish those nuns would have said: "We read the Gospel that way at Mass because the people rejected Christ, and we want to remember that we ourselves reject Christ whenever we … " and we'd supply examples.

I have not sent anyone to his death here in Honduras, but I do reject Christ when I get upset with panhandling street kids, for example. I tell myself that I don't dislike them; I'm just concerned for their safety. But I get callous. I'm sure Jesus would not yell at these kids to keep their squeegees off his windshield.

One of the biggest tests I face here in my work is remaining patient and having respect for everyone's opinion. Every time I cut someone off verbally—and I find this hard to avoid in this country where going off on tangents is something of a national pastime—I am rejecting Christ's teachings to love and respect my neighbors.

This seems to me to be a good thing to remember during Lent. What do I do to reject Christ? I cannot send him to the cross. I'm lucky enough to live now, not then, and not face that temptation. But how do I ignore his message today? What kinds of things can I do to keep the message alive?

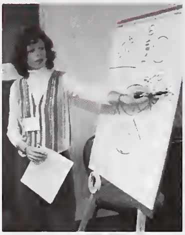
Eric Timar is Mennonite Central Committee worker from Cleveland. He is a member of St. Stephen's Catholic Church, Minneapolis.

The mission agencies: composite and comparison

Agency	Program beginnings Home	Overseas	1999 budget	Office staff (FTE)	Long-term workers* 1	2	3	Short-term workers**
COMMISSION ON HOME MINISTRIES *General Conference Mennonite Church*	1861		$1 million	13.0		17		126
COMMISSION ON OVERSEAS MISSION *General Conference Mennonite Church*		1900	$2.4 million	15.5	59	4	38	30
EASTERN MENNONITE MISSIONS *Lancaster Conference*	1896	1934	$6.8 million	51.0	117	30	118	128
MENNONITE BOARD OF MISSIONS *Mennonite Church*	1882	1899	$7.1 million	58.0	87	55	34	1,140
MINISTRIES COMMISSION *Mennonite Church Canada*	1903	1972	$870,000	4.0	15			65
VIRGINIA MENNONITE BD. OF MISSIONS *Virginia Conference*	1871	1955	$1.1 million	8.2	18	10	11	128
TOTALS			$19.27 million	149.7	613			1,617

*Long-term worker categories: (1) fully employed, (2) partners receiving some support, (3) nonsalaried mission associates

**Short-term workers are those who serve for less than one year.



MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Janet Plenert, Latin America program administrator for the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, diagrams ideas for a new mission structure during a March 24-26 consultation in Harrisonburg, Va. As part of the transformation process in the past year, mission agencies have examined mission theology, context and trends; interviewed mission workers and overseas partners; examined results of the "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church" congregational study; and assessed resources.

Mission gathering: decentralize structure

HARRISONBURG, Va.—The mission agency for the new Mennonite Church should provide resources for congregations to establish partnerships with other congregations for the work of spreading God's good news, said participants at a March 24-26 mission consultation.

Some 200 denominational and area conference mission personnel gathered in Harrisonburg to provide input for the transformation of existing mission organizations into something new. Next steps will be considered at a smaller meeting of mission leaders at a retreat in Chicago in late April.

"Grass-roots sensitive" mission structures was one of the top priorities raised by consultation participants, tilting the vision for outreach toward a decentralized body with the congregation at the center.

Robert J. Suderman, executive secretary of the Mennonite Church Canada Ministries Commission, said the consultation "confirmed and affirmed … the strong call for local control and connection to mission efforts and enterprises, for decentralization and for multiple connections [around the world]."

Rick Derksen, a longtime mission worker in Congo, challenged the consultation to go further and consider "dismantling the [North American] mission structures and systems."

"I fear that as we go through a lengthy process, investing a lot of time and energy and money, we'll once again develop North American structures in a relative position of power in comparison to global partners," said Derksen, who now lives in Lancaster, Pa.

A vision for multiethnic and multicultural congregations was another priority highlighted by the consultation. Mennonite Voluntary Service staff member Malinda Berry noted "the failure to address the issue of gender equity. Is being a missional church going to invite me to be a whole person?"

Elizabeth Soto Albrecht, a Commission on Overseas Mission board member, noted the gathering's extensive use of PowerPoint computer-generated presentations. "PowerPoint is beautiful, but Hispanic culture is oral," she said on behalf of Spanish-speaking participants. "Can we remember to respect each other's culture?"

The consultation also included a presentation of data on the mission agencies involved in the transformation discussions (see chart above). That was new and significant, said consultant Patrick Keifert. "You had people who've cooperated … but who had never before envisioned being together looking at each other together instead of [as] separate entities," he said.—*Ron Rempel of* Canadian Mennonite *and Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

MBM worker looks to fill spiritual hunger of Japanese people through pastoral position

TOKYO—From the time she was 8, Angela Wenger knew she wanted to be a missionary. Even so, the path that led her to Japan with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) has surprised her.

"I had always pictured going to a country with physical needs," says the Harrisonburg, Va., native. "Japan is an affluent country. Yet there are so many people hungering in spiritual ways, seeking meaning for life."

Wenger first went to Japan in 1994 to teach English and explore her call to mission work. She expected to eventually move to a country in the developing world. "I didn't think of Japan in terms of long range," she says.

But after two years, Wenger says, she changed her mind. "This is where God wanted me to be," she says. "God gave me a heart for Japanese people."

Wenger has spent the last three years in ministry training as the only foreigner at Kirisuto Kyodaidan Bible School in Ibaraki, Japan. She graduated April 1. The denomination that operates the school, Kirisuto Kyodaidan, assigns graduates to full-time ministry, either as pastor of a small congregation or as assistant pastor of a larger one.

Wenger's program, all in Japanese, focuses on spiritual formation. A typical day begins with a 6 a.m. prayer meeting. After breakfast and chores, students spend an hour in devotions. Classes begin at 9 a.m. "The first year, I'd take an English Bible, a Japanese Bible and two dictionaries to class," she says.

When classes end at 3 p.m., the students do chores until supper, often including preparing for conferences hosted by the school. After supper, students attend another prayer meeting. The rest of the evening is for studying and preparing for weekend ministry assignments.

Wenger

The strength of the program is the combination of Bible study, ministry preparation and mission training, Wenger says. That allows students to focus exclusively on study and spiritual disciplines.

"We're not going home to families or other jobs," she says. "Prayer meetings and chores are part of our everyday lives. Students come with the decision already made to be in full-time ministry."

During weekends, the students work in congregations. Wenger spends three hours on the train to get to her assignment in Yokohama. In addition to a variety of roles in worship services, she works in open-air evangelism, often visiting neighborhood parks and telling stories to children. She also teaches English classes.

One of Wenger's greatest lessons from Japanese Christians is devotion to church life. "Churches operate as a family," she says. "People devote their one day off, the whole day, to church activities."—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

Capital singers to lift voices for peace

For the second year in a row, a group of U.S. Mennonites are planning to sing a message of peace amid Washington's halls of power.

First Mennonite Church of Richmond, Va., will sponsor the second annual Hymnsing for Peace at 4 p.m. on April 15 on the Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool steps. Most songs will come from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. The event is expected to last about an hour and a half. The group will also distribute leaflets to explain the reason for the hymnsing.

"The spirit of this event is intended to be one of witness to the collective conscience of the government, to those watching and to those participating that there are many creative ways to solve conflict rather than with violence," says a news release from the organizers.

They have also composed a letter to President Clinton, asking, "What actions could we, as pacifists, take that would help to provide real alternatives to the decisions that you or our next president, as commander in chief, make that necessitate [the] taking of human life?"

EMM photo by Timm Wenger

We're praying for you
We miss you!

Mission portrait

Barb, Randy and Herb Keener of Lebanon, Pa., pose for Eastern Mennonite Missions photographer Dale Gehman to take a digital photo to be sent to their son and brother Mike, serving with EMM's Youth Evangelism Service in Sweden. EMM offered the service at its "Encourage a Missionary" booth at Lancaster Conference's annual meeting March 17-19 in Lancaster, Pa.

Troubled German-speaking Mennonite groups reaching higher for education at Mexico school

CUAUHTEMOC, Mexico—German-speaking Mennonites in northern Mexico who come from a church tradition that shunned schooling are now looking to education to guide them in moving into the 21st century.

"When I first came in 1955, teachers were poor and from the lower class," says Helen Ens, a Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) worker who taught in northern Mexico for 40 years before retiring in 1995. "They received little or no respect and had little education; some could barely read for themselves."

In contrast, a COM-supported Bible school drew nearly 70 students for the winter 2000 term. Located on the grounds of Steinreich Mennonite Church near Cuauhtemoc, it held a January ribbon-cutting ceremony for a new fourplex apartment building to house married students and for visiting faculty and staff, who come primarily from Canada. The school, called Center for Continuing Christian Education, also has a dormitory on the campus.

The school, which runs from January to late March or early April, is supported by the Conference of Mennonites in Mexico, which consists of three German-speaking congregations in northern Mexico and a Spanish-speaking mission church in Cuauhtemoc.

The conference has its roots in the Old Colony Mennonite church, a conservative group which first moved to Mexico from Canada in the 1920s and '30s to seek further separation from the world. That separation has historically included de-emphasizing education. But the desire for more education helped lead to the formation of the Conference of Mennonites in Mexico, which is affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church.

"These people left Canada to get away from the corrupting influences of 'the world,' " says COM executive secretary Ron Flaming, who visited the school in January. "Ironically, they have now ended up in the middle of that same corrupting influence, seen in alcohol abuse among the young people and, more recently, involvement in drug abuse and drug trafficking. [The leaders] are beginning to recognize the importance of education for strengthening and preserving their community."

COM provides health coverage for the teachers and staff at the school and last year paid for director Ben Froese to study at Steinbach (Man.) Bible College.

"[German-speaking Mennonites in Mexico] are in the same position as in Manitoba in the 1940s, with most people having a grade nine education or less," says Abe Rempel, who directed the Bible school during a COM assignment in the early 1990s. "We're looking forward to a time when the education level is higher. That's some years away, although we are seeing some students who go on to preparation for university and then to university."

Students come from German-speaking Mennonite communities in Belize, southern Texas and Canada, in addition to Mexico. The school attracts primarily young people, but Rempel says the age range is "16 to 60," including people who can barely read and those with high school education.

Class choices range from basic adult literacy and beginning Spanish to Bible classes and child psychology.

"I think one of the greatest services the school can do is to keep offering courses that develop the skills of those who are functionally illiterate," says Ens, who, since retiring to Manitoba, has returned for several short-term assignments. "Education is not the answer to everything. But the lack of it gives a terrific inferiority complex."

"We can teach what it means to be Mennonite, what it means to be Christian. It's hard to learn those things if they can't read and reason for themselves."

The school started in the mid 1960s. Since then, interest has fluctuated. It was discontinued for several years in the mid-1980s but has been operating annually since 1987.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

We're looking forward to a time when the education level is higher. That's some years away.

—Abe Rempel

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MCC makes the grade in organizational ratings

AKRON, Pa.—The American Institute of Philanthropy (AIP) has rated Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) one of the top agencies doing international relief and development.

MCC was one of eight organizations to receive an "A" rating from AIP. "A" ratings are given to organizations that channel 75 percent or more of revenue toward program costs while spending $25 or less to raise $100. MCC spends $2 for every $100 raised and allocates 91 percent of revenue for program costs.

"The real story is the shops, relief sales and people who volunteer their time to MCC," says Brenda Wagner, director of Constituency Ministries. "They are the reason our fund-raising costs are kept so low. These are the people who give their time and resources to make MCC's North American and international programs possible."

MCC thrift stores, relief sales and other constituent-run fund-raisers brought in $9.6 million in 1999.—*MCC News Service*

Publishing merger progresses with appointment

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—A new marketing division to serve both Faith & Life Press (FLP) and Mennonite Publishing House (MPH) has been created as part of plans to merge the two publishing operations. Dennis Good has been named vice president of the new division, effective Aug. 1. He will remain in his current positions of Commission on Education executive secretary and FLP publisher in Newton, Kan.

FLP and MPH entered into a joint operating agreement on Feb. 1 with plans to merge fully by Feb. 1, 2001.

In other MPH organizational changes, Levi Miller, vice president of Herald Press Congregational Publishing, will also become vice president of Herald Press Trade Books. He will succeed Paul M. Schrock, who is retiring after 41 years with the company.

Canadian Mennonite editor given new term

WATERLOO, Ont.—*Canadian Mennonite* editor Ron Rempel has accepted an invitation to continue in that position for another five-year term. The offer came from the board of Mennonite Publishing Services, which publishes the magazine. Rempel became editor of *Mennonite Reporter* 20 years ago and four years ago directed the publication's transition to *Canadian Mennonite,* the magazine of Mennonite Church Canada.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Bethel students win national debate title

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Two freshmen from Bethel College, North Newton, were crowned as national collegiate debate champions at the 18th annual Novice National Individual Events Tournament March 24-26 at Del Mar College in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Ryan Graber from Newton, Kan., and Aziza Hasan from Halstead, Kan., were the only team to go through the tournament undefeated. The event drew participants from 25 schools.

In other tournament categories, Graber and Hasan took fourth place in duo interpretation, and Graber placed seventh in dramatic interpretation. Hasan was also a seminfinalist in prose interpretation and impromptu speaking.

by the way ...

The largest U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church congregation is Bethesda Mennonite Church of Henderson, Neb., with 1,131 members.
—*Mennonite Directory 2000*

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Births

Castillo, Andrés Julian, Feb. 6 to Julio and Marta (Beidler) Castillo, Norristown, Pa.

Haskins, Hailey Amaya, March 17, to Kevin and Melissa (Miller) Haskins, Kalona, Iowa.

Kehl, Aline Phyllis, March 11, to Christine and Leon Kehl, Kitchener, Ont.

Keim, Caleb Ryan, March 14, to Lori (Short) and Ryan Keim, Archbold, Ohio

Miller, Boston James, Feb. 12, to Crystal (Wyler) and Denver Miller, Sarasota, Fla.

Mullett, Riley Alisabeth, March 13, to Brad and Megan (Miller) Mullett, Sarasota, Fla.

Nafziger, Nitin Don, May 11, 1997, received for adoption Feb. 29, 2000 by Don and Rose (Kratz) Nafziger, Pottstown, Pa.

Oberholtzer, Bryan James, Feb. 10, to Sheri (Shenk) and Steve Oberholtzer, Lititz, Pa.

Pierce, Sophia Grace, Feb. 29, to Charlene (Bontrager) and Mark Pierce, Granger, Ind.

Raeburn, Andrew Robert, Feb. 4, to Beth (Suter) and Ray Raeburn, Bluffton, Ohio.

Rediger, Bethany Rose, March 2, to Michelle (Janzen) and Tom Rediger, Hesston, Kan.

Swartley, Hannah Marie, Feb. 29, to Jim and Lynn (Testone) Swartley, Quakertown, Pa.

Thomas, Rose Marie, March 15, to Cheryl (King) and Don Thomas, Middlebury, Ind.

Marriages

Franz/Friesen: Jill Franz, Henderson, Neb., and Bradley Friesen, Henderson, March 11 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Knepp/Yoder: Shea Knepp, Sarasota, Fla., and Jeff Yoder, Sarasota, March 11 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Schrock/VanClees: Jennifer Schrock, Sarasota, Fla., and Allen VanClees, Sarasota, Feb. 26 at Grace Baptist Church, Sarasota.

Steinmetz/Troyer: Jane Kingsley Steinmetz, Bluffton, Ohio, and Marc Troyer, Elida, Ohio, Feb. 26 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Deaths

Bergey, Anne Derstine, 60, Lexington, Mass., died March 8. Spouse: Ted Bergey. Parents: Abram and Ruth Derstine (deceased). Other survivors: children James, Kimberly. Memorial service: April 2 in Lexington.

Bontrager, Mabel Miller, 77, South Hutchinson, Kan., died March 14 of a stroke. Spouse: Enos Bontrager (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Susie Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Treva Lichti, Carl, Judy Langley, LaDonna Monaldo; eight grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 20 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

Dellinger, Richard, 77, Manheim, Pa., died March 7. Survivors: children Verdi Bays, Richard, Margaret Williams; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 10 at Mount Joy, Pa.

Dick, Arthur, 100, Hesston, Kan., died Feb. 23. Parents: Jacob and Elizabeth Penner Dick. Memorial service: Feb. 25 at Schowalter Villa Chapel, Hesston.

Habegger, Lillian Bailey, 75, Bluffton, Ohio, died March 12. Spouse: Merl Habegger (deceased). Parents: Forest and Ethel Bailey (deceased). Survivors: children Terry, Gloria Jean Miller; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 14 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

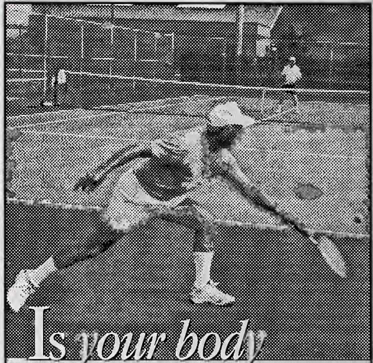
Nissley, Ruth Mylin, 84, Mount Joy, Pa., died March 19 of cancer. Spouse: Arthur Nissley. Other survivors: children Carol Fisher, Gerald; two grandchildren. Funeral: March 22 at Erisman Mennonite Church, Manheim, Pa.

Pfeiffer, Joel, 26, Fort Myers, Fla., died Feb. 23 of renal failure. Parents: John (deceased) and Jean Pfeiffer. Funeral: Feb. 28 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla.

Shutt, Madaline Mizer, 88, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died March 3 of a stroke. Spouse: Frank Shutt (deceased). Parents: Luther and Irene Cline Mizer (deceased). Funeral: March 7 at First Mennonite Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Snyder, Alice Laura, 82, Kitchener, Ont., died Feb. 23. Parents: Menno and Ida Groh Snyder (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 26 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event.



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The committee will begin processing resumes in summer 2000.

by Gordon Houser

Remember the 1960s? For that matter, remember the early '80s? There were more open protests against war, nuclear weapons and various injustices. Where have all the protesters gone?

In *Sojourners* (March-April), Danny Duncan Collum wonders if the protests at the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle on Nov. 30, 1999, marked "a new chapter … in our ancient and honorable fight to bend the means of production and communication to the will of the people."

Whether or not he's right (I think he's too optimistic), something needs to change. As Arthur Jones writes in *National Catholic Reporter* (March 10), "The First World is looting the planet," and U.S. citizens are doing little to counter that. Seattle may have been a wake-up call, but more than protest is needed.

In a small but important book, *Roots of Violence in the U.S. Culture* (Blue Dolphin, 1999, $14.95), Alain J. Richard writes that some areas of our behavior demand "a gigantic effort of transformation."

The cause of our moral malaise is too deep to overcome easily. "Good-hearted people continue to recommend new laws, more police, more prisons or a rekindling of moralism," Richard writes, but "none of these can heal the principles on which our culture is established."

Richard argues that we live in a "market culture" that is "suffocating the center of our being." While a human-based culture sees the individual becoming a person through the dynamic of relationships, the market culture sees individuals primarily as producers and consumers. Profit becomes the measuring stick for everything.

Richard shows how the individualism of the self-made man (yes, "man"), racism and the Number One complex (the understanding that God is guaranteeing the wealth and has called the United States to a special destiny) all feed this market culture and are roots of many "violences."

He calls for the formation of a nonviolent culture and lists 10 principles. These include an emphasis on relationships, human dignity, the sacredness of all creation, respect for opponents, the power of truth and love, community formation and willingness to suffer.

A good start toward such transformation is to read this book and discuss it.

art

Jana Bauman, 12, of First Mennonite Church, Allentown, Pa., designed an anti-violence mural for a wall outside her elementary school in North Philadelphia. Her design, part of a nationwide contest, showed five children of different races, each wearing a T-shirt displaying a letter of the word "peace."

films

Two quality films from 1999 are *Topsy-Turvy* (R) and *The Cider House Rules* (PG-13). The former, about Gilbert and Sullivan of opera fame, artfully explores the creative process. The latter suffers from its didactic treatment of abortion but tells a moving story of an orphan's search for a vocation that is useful and good.

The goodness of imperfection

by Ted Lewis

To all perfection I see a limit.—Psalm 119:96

Not long ago I visited my childhood Baptist church. The service I attended—in a large, new auditorium that had more in common with a corporate board room than the average sanctuary—left me wondering if this was in fact my old church.

The smooth, careful orchestration of the service was a far cry from the homespun feel of my Mennonite church, surrounded by milo fields. My church does not have a sound and light booth requiring five pairs of hands. It does not have huge screens to show lyrics. But it does have one thing I like: mistakes.

In the wake of Willow Creek Community Church phenomenon, many congregations throughout the United States have designed tailor-made services for otherwise unreached suburban Americans. I talked to a college student who said her hometown Mennonite church had adopted this same user-friendly vision, and it was growing.

The three-services-per-Sunday-morning churches are reaching folks who might otherwise be mowing lawns or playing golf. Hurting people are being healed. But Eugene Peterson gave this Revelation-letter warning to such churches: "You're too impressed with … influence. It distresses me that you so uncritically copy the attitudes and methods that make your life in suburbia work so well." The danger is that the gospel, presented through the ambience of professionalism, becomes a consumer item.

A flawless service also eclipses the truth of our humanity. "All of us make many mistakes" (James 3:2). There's no reason our times for gathering shouldn't reflect the imperfections we live with daily. Perhaps then, without the special effects, we can better see how God's grace is straightforward yet not spoonfed, free yet inviting a costly response.

Ted Lewis lives near Pawnee Rock, Kan.

From our readers: Thanks for sharing a list of more books on Celtic Christianity. Another for your list is *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West … Again* by George G. Hunter III (Abingdon Press, 2000). The Celtic model of evangelism, an alternative to many popular within evangelical circles today, would be appropriate for Anabaptist congregations to consider.
—Gary and Sonya Olsen-Hasek, Portland, Ore.

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J. Lorne Peachey

When the Pope confesses our sins

Seldom have sin and confession made international headlines as they did last month. On the eve of his trip to the Holy Land, Pope John Paul II begged forgiveness for sins against Christian unity, against Jews, against other religions, against women and against individual rights. We all know, of course, he was confessing for the Roman Catholic Church, of which he is head.

Except that's not the way our local newspaper saw it. "Pope offers apology for sins of church," the headline shouted in bold letters in the upper right-hand corner of the front page—prime space for reader attention. Nor was this newspaper alone. Since the Pope's confession, I've read and heard a great deal about the Christian church and its sins.

Now wait a minute, I want to protest. This is not my church. My group of believers did not participate in or condone much of the what the Pope confessed. In fact, as Anabaptist-Mennonites who trace our roots back to the Reformation, we were victims of some of the violence the Pope acknowledged. In addition, I was not alive during sins like the Crusades or the Inquisition, and I was too young to protest the Holocaust.

The humility and sorrow Pope John Paul II showed in his confession of the sins of the church are attitudes we would do well to emulate, even as Mennonites.

But I stop myself, realizing that argument doesn't work today—if it ever did. Communication technology has brought our world closer together so that we are more aware of different groups and religions on our globe. I suspect that, just as most Christians can't distinguish between different kinds of Muslims or Jews, many people make few distinctions between Christians. So when the Pope confesses the sins of the church, in the minds of many, because we are part of the Christian church, we Mennonites are included, whether we want to be or not.

What do we do when the Pope confesses our sins? We could try to distance ourselves from the church he speaks for and educate people about differences between Catholics and Protestants, mainliners and evangelicals or all those other divisions that have come to characterize the Christian church—something about which, I suspect, the world cares very little. We could argue that Mennonites have always been against the sins that the Pope named, such as war, and therefore we should not be seen as participating in his confession. Aside from being self-righteous, those are arguments that will not impress unbelievers, who, aware of too much belligerence and abuse of power on the part of Christians throughout the centuries, need to see a different attitude from the followers of Jesus.

I found an example of what that could be from the Pope himself. As I watched his confession, I was impressed with his shaking hands and pale face. His words were so quiet I barely understood them, even when they were in English. All this can be chalked up to Pope John Paul II battling Parkinson's disease, to be sure. But to me they also showed humility and sorrow. The Pope chose to ignore his limitations to do what he thought necessary to begin to build peace and reconciliation in today's world: confess the sins of the church.

Writing in *Newsweek* (March 27), church historian Martin Marty commends the Pope as a model for children of God. The humility and sorrow he showed in his confession are attitudes we would do well to emulate, even as Mennonites. We might admit that, even though we believe in peace and are against war, throughout our history we have fought for far less than holy lands or heresies, if not with swords, at least with words. We might also confess that too often in our zeal to be followers of Jesus we deny the gospel of love and service that he preached and lived.

It would be a new day if the unbelieving world could see as much contriteness and humility on the part of Christians as they have seen lust for power and violence in defense of truth in Christ's church. This would do more to attract onlookers to our faith than any well-reasoned arguments about beliefs or our ways of living out the gospel. Pope John Paul II set an example that could bring that day much closer to reality.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

April 18, 2000

APR 17 '00

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ELKHART, IN

he is risen!

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20 Easter is Tupperware in your refrigerator

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Meaty subject

As one who experienced a deep sense of liberation some 30 years ago by refraining from the consumption of meat, I read John Zimmerman's "The Peaceable Kingdom at Hand" (March 28) article with great interest. How different our lives would be if we extended nonviolence to the level of other creatures with whom we share so much genetically. Could it be that our treatment of other forms of life is directly related to our inability to deal with the problems of war, street violence and our callous attitude toward the unborn? Until we face the problem on this level, there is little hope for a peaceful world.

Other forms of life were not created to satisfy our appetites but that together we might glorify God and enjoy nature in all of its diversity. The slaughter of an animal in the biblical period was considered a religious rite and was carried out at the altar. It was to be consumed at the sanctuary and shared with others. This did not occur frequently. The American Indian would ask forgiveness of the animal by explaining that the surrendered life would be incorporated through the consumption of its flesh into the life of the one who took it. This was a deeply religious act. How different is the modern love of hunting.

Karl Barth pointed out that human beings and animals shared the same table in the symbolic past (Genesis 1:29-30). The same picture is painted for the future in Isaiah 11, as Zimmerman points out so well. Does it not behoove us as disciples of Jesus to celebrate that kingdom today in our relationship with other creatures?—*Laverne Rutschman, North Newton, Kan.*

For the sake of consistency with his vegetarian ethic, I hope Zimmerman does not wear a leather belt or leather shoes or live in a house built of wood. Leather comes from animals which are killed. Wood for building houses often comes from the destruction of forests, which results in habitat loss for animals (the largest single reason for the decline of wild animal populations). Meanwhile, most of our modern substitutes for leather and wood come from petroleum. Obtaining, processing and transporting petroleum and its products destroy significant animal habitat also. Is that better than using leather or wood?

Human beings are omnivores. God designed us to eat both plants and animals. I believe that design is good. I respect the right of vegetarians to believe and act as they do. There are good reasons not to eat animals. There are also good reasons—environmentally sound, humane ones—to eat animals. I do not believe that either position brings us closer to the kingdom of God. I'm disappointed that the editors chose to devote a two-page feature article to the idea that vegetarianism does just that. It should have been a letter in Readers Say.—*Ron Meyer, Scottdale, Pa.*

I commend Zimmerman for submitting his article, and I commend the editors for publishing it. An important point in his article is that "the reason [for eating meat] that was adequate in first-century Palestine falls short in the 20th-century United States." We have information on nutrition and lifestyle today that was not available in Bible times. Meat-eating was not condemned by Jesus, just as slavery and women taking a leadership role in the church were not condemned. It is very important to put issues of this nature in a realistic context. And contexts change with the passing of time and as new developments occur.—*D. Paul Miller, Normal, Ill.*

Sometimes I wonder if you shouldn't change the name of the magazine to *Mother Earth Mennonite.—Eugene Martin, Evans Mills, N.Y*

God's gender

I was delighted to read "God Is Father … and Mother" by Howard Zehr (March 21). I was particularly touched by the author's sensitivity in recognizing that women who have been abused by male caretakers may have an extremely difficult time in relating to masculine images of God. The trauma often results in issues of trust and safety that may be transferred to a God who is also and only male, thus distorting or destroying this most important of all relationships.

Last year, while taking a class at Hesston (Kan.) College on the prophets, I wrote a term paper on "Feminine Images of God in the Prophets." As I began this project, I had to deal with my own discomfort about the topic. I asked if accepting both male and female metaphors in referring to God diminishes God in some way. I wondered if my paper might even be viewed by some as heretical. Those concerns indicated my own inherent prejudices and fears, which were the result of a lifetime of being told that God is male. My research convinced me, as Zehr states, that "only by experi-

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

encing the potential of male and female metaphors can we participate in the fullness of God."

May we all continue to be surprised, delighted and challenged by our amazing God, who purposefully placed each metaphor in Scripture, anticipating the time when we would be open to understanding the fullness of God in a new way.—*Joan Boyer, Hesston, Kan.*

As a Christian who has for several years been uncomfortable with exclusively male images of God, I agree with Zehr that we are denying ourselves some wonderful ways of thinking about God by limiting our thoughts to male metaphors. Most people agree that God has no gender. If it's OK to call a genderless God Father, why is it wrong to call a genderless God Mother? Besides those images mentioned in the article, the Bible refers to God as a woman giving birth (Deuteronomy 32:18 and Isaiah 42:14), a comforting mother (Isaiah 66:13), hen gathering her brood (Luke 13:34) and a fierce mother bear robbed of her cubs (Hosea 13:8).

We are comfortable with thinking of God as a mighty fortress, a rock, a shepherd, a shield, a hiding place and, of course, a father. Perhaps it's time to enjoy the feeling of being fiercely protected by a God who is like a mother bear or being nurtured by a God who comforts us like only a mother can.—*Wendy Buckwalter, Greencastle, Pa.*

Did it please the Lord when we squandered his dollars publishing a hymnal including a pagan hymn addressed to "mothering God?" Faithful Anabaptists do not worship female gods. And the God of Heaven is not effeminate. Hundreds of times in the Bible, God is spoken of as Father. And no hint of femininity. —*Frank Horst, Warden, Wash.*

Cover photo
by Religious News Service

Time for healing

Many of us with ties to both the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church love both denominations too much to see either become more fractured. Would it not be wise—and is it still not possible—to place a moratorium on integration/transformation) until there is a clearer consensus of unity? Much progress has already been accomplished at the program level. This is not a call to cancel but to postpone the marriage and continue living together in Christian fellowship.

If additional congregations or area conferences at the local level wish to continue merging, well and good. Additional congregations or even conferences may choose to have dual affiliation, but additional pressures should not be exerted on either conferences or congregations for realignment or merger with each other or with Mennonite Church USA.

Some day soon Mennonite Church USA will exist. (Won't it be wonderful when it happens more spontaneously and joyfully?) For now, without taking steps backward on what has been accomplished in joint programs and ministries, let us allow time for the current fragmentation to heal and for both denominations, while they are still in place, to nurture healing and reconciliation on the issues that are dividing us. Surely this could be the primary focus for the regional meetings that have already begun across the church.—*Sam and Helen Lapp, Lansdale, Pa.*

Keeping the word

Listen to what Jehoiakim, king of Judah, did when Jeremiah the prophet brought the word of the Lord. Jehoiakim cut the scroll and tossed it into the fire (Jeremiah 36:11-26). In the March 14 editorial ("I Do and We Will"), J. Lorne Peachey is saddened by those "individuals who slip out of one congregation and into another." There are many out there who are trying to be faithful in keeping the word of the Lord. They see the need for discipline in the church and are now being undermined by the guidelines for membership in the new denomination.—*Jonathan Stoltzfus, Goshen, Ind.*

Neither east nor west

The sidebar to the report on the Eastern District Conference vote could have included East Swamp Mennonite Church as being just as old as West Swamp ("Conference Includes Oldest Churches," March 28). They both have the same history as one congregation from 1717 to 1921, using two meetinghouses two miles apart in the Quakertown, Pa., countryside. During this time they shared the same ministers. As church work became more complex with Sunday school, youth meetings and other programs often related to one building or the other, one of the groups felt it would be better served if it had its own minister. So one congregation became two. They parted in a good spirit, wishing each other well.—*Maynard Shelly, North Newton, Kan.*

Journalism contest gives six awards to magazine

theMennonite
stop
the killing

Associated Church Press gave second place to this cover from the May 18, 1999, issue.

CHICAGO—*The Mennonite* received honors in six categories, including two first-place awards, from the Associated Church Press (ACP) during the organization's annual convention March 30 in Chicago.

The Mennonite's pre- and post-St. Louis 99 issues garnered an award of excellence (first place) for convention or meeting coverage by a magazine. The judge called it "imaginative writing and solid reporting."

An award of excellence was also given to the magazine for "Against the System" by Kathleen Kern in the category of theological reflection less than 1,500 words. "A solid reflection on a relevant topic, civil disobedience," the judge said.

The Mennonite won an award of merit (second place) in the category of one-, two- or three-color magazine cover (see left). Associate editor Rich Preheim received two honorable mentions (third place), one for editorial writing ("A Bug's Life—And Death," about the Columbine killings)and one for news writing ("Gay or Straight, 'Promiscuity Is Sinful' ").

The magazine also took home the Blooper of the Year award. An article last April erroneously reported Mennonite Central Committee sending "two 20-foot containers filled with 67,200 pounds of MCC canned beer" instead of beef. The typographical error escaped all editorial safeguards and went to press. But the press broke after about 50 sheets had been printed. While waiting for repairs, a press operator looked at what he was printing and noticed the mistake, which was immediately corrected.

ACP is an 84-year-old professional association of 175 religious publications. The 2000 competition featured more than 1,000 entries. *U.S. Catholic* won the most awards with 13. *Sojourners* and *The Other Side* each received 11 awards.

The refuse of society

by Helen Lepp Friesen

There are the streets in every town
  whose sidewalks are garnished
  with shredded plastic bags,
  clinging tenaciously to fences
  that won't let them escape.
Soiled wrappers carelessly discarded,
  once shiny and crisp,
  now wrinkled, discolored and ugly,
  are held captive by the mud.
Bottles and glass shards
  lace the remnants of grass and wilted flowers.
The stench of rancid food
  sways here and there with the wind.
Buildings that sag like a sad smile with missing teeth
  hover over the lost fragments of pavement.

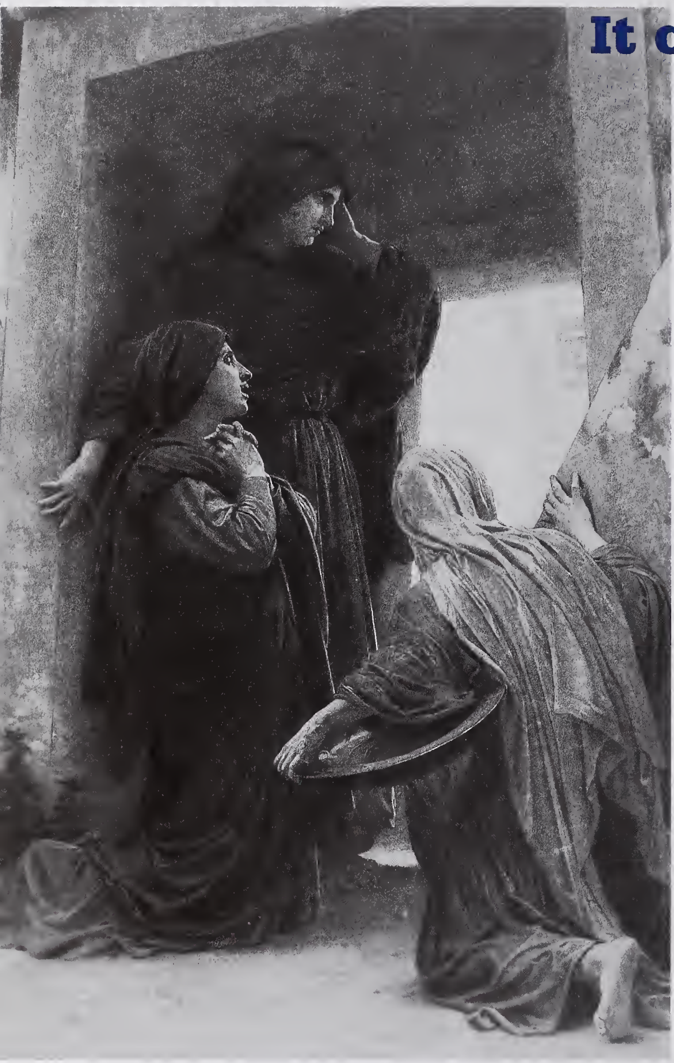
Along those streets he walks,
  head bent with shredded honor,
  clinging desperately
  to the walls that surround and exclude him.
Once polished and lustrous, perhaps wealthy and
    respectable,
  now with crumpled esteem and rumpled attire,
  tatters of feelings, broken and scattered
  teetering here and there.
Depending on the excess of others,
  at the homeless shelter,
  where food is prepared from
  scavenged expired vegetables and fruits,
  or the stretched-out hand begging,
  "Twenty-five cents please, just twenty-five cents."

One day a clean-up crew hits the streets
  gathering the plastic bags from the fences,
  the muddy wrappers from the ground,
  the bottles, glass and cans from the median.
All the refuse is tied in a black bag,
  neatly discarded forever.

Will someone get there before the black bags?
Who will take his rigid hands
  and unsnarl them from the fences
  that hold him captive?
Who will pick up the discarded wrappings
  and uncover his honor and dignity?
Who will help him gather the shreds
  and piece them back together to make him whole?
Who will assist him in lifting his heavy tattered clothing
  to reveal a crown
  and a royal garb that makes him shine again?

Helen Lepp Friesen lives in Gallup, N.M.

CLEO Photography


Religious News Service

It causes me to tremble

Does the possibility of what might happen to you in worship, on Easter Sunday, or any Sunday, make your body quiver?

by Kenneth L. Gibble

What makes you tremble? What makes you shake or shiver, quake or quiver? When you're sick with the flu, your body does those things, of course. Or when you go swimming and you get out of the water and the cool air hits you, maybe your teeth chatter, your skin gets goose bumps, and you stand there shivering.

But what else makes you tremble, makes your body quiver with excitement or anticipation? A first date, a job interview, a tense moment in a ball game? Yes? No? How about … going to church? Does the possibility of what might happen to you in worship, on Easter Sunday or any other Sunday, make you tremble? Probably not.

Most North Americans expect worship on a Sunday morning to be fairly quiet and dignified. It's what we are used to. Some Christians, of course, are used to worship that is noisy and rambunctious, with lots of body movement, hand clapping, even shouting. But most of us don't tremble outwardly in church.

What about inwardly? Does what is said or sung, spoken or prayed, ever make you tremble inside? Are you ever overwhelmed by the power of the gospel, by the amazing grace of God? Does it ever shake you up?

The spiritual asks, not once but twice: "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" And then, without waiting for an answer, the song makes its own testimony: "Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble." And you can tell by those words that whether or not you or I were there when they crucified our Lord, the singer was there, and the sight of Jesus being nailed to the tree, pierced in the side and laid in the tomb caused a terrible, fearful trembling.

But then we come to the last verse of the spiritual: "Were you there when he rose up from the dead?" And you'd think that resurrection would elicit a different reaction. Not fear but gladness. But notice what the song says: "Were you there when he rose up from the dead? Oh, sometimes it causes me to tremble, tremble, tremble."

In the Gospel accounts of the first Easter, the reaction of those who learn about the resurrection is not happiness, not elation, but confusion, disbelief and fear.

We have domesticated Easter, tamed it, stripped it of its power to produce anything that remotely resembles trembling. Easter is something we just do—once every spring.

Disbelief and fear: And if you are wondering why the trembling, why not a breaking forth of hallelujahs on Easter in this song, remember that in the Gospel accounts of the first Easter, the reaction of those who learn about the resurrection is not happiness, not elation, but confusion, disbelief and fear.

Wouldn't your reaction and mine have been the same? I can't speak for you, of course, but I can tell you I prefer life to be predictable, sensible, manageable. I'm not fond of surprises. Even pleasant surprises make me uncomfortable. Whenever one of those eventful birthdays came along for me—like the big Four-Oh or the big Five-Oh—I told my wife: "Promise me, no surprise birthday parties."

I realize this confession makes me sound hopelessly dull and boring, but there it is. I'm the kind of person who prefers that, as the apostle Paul put it, "all things should be done decently and in order" (1 Corinthians 14:40).

Decently and in order. That's how Luke's account of the first Easter begins. Joseph, described as "a good and righteous man," does a good and righteous thing. He takes the corpse of Jesus and lays it in a tomb. And the women—we don't usually call them disciples of Jesus, but they were (Luke 23:49 says "they had come with [Jesus] from Galilee")—did what was customary in their time when a loved one died. They prepared spices and ointments, and they made plans to go to the tomb and anoint the body of the dead man.

All things done decently and in order. Listening to this account, we admire Joseph and the women for their faithfulness and their courage. We nod our heads in approval at their steadfastness, their loyalty. There is much to be said about such people, the kind of people you can count on—people who are dependable, who won't let you down when the going gets rough, people who will be there for you at times of disappointment and sadness, people who know what needs to be done and will do it.

When these good, loyal women come to the tomb and find it empty, when they see "two men ... in dazzling apparel" and hear them say that their Lord is risen from the dead, it's perfectly natural that the women are terribly frightened and fall face down on the ground. A Lord risen from the dead is not predictable, it is not manageable, it is something totally new. When resurrection happens, you tremble.

So the women get to their feet and run back to tell the men what they had seen and heard. And the men's reaction? Luke says, "These words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them" (24:11). And why should they believe the women? Resurrection is not believable. It doesn't fit the way we live our sensible, predictable, manageable lives.

We have domesticated Easter, tamed it, stripped it of its power to produce anything that remotely resembles trembling. Easter is something we just do—once every spring.

But resurrection? Resurrection is something only God can do.

God's victory: So let me ask you again: What makes you tremble? Whatever answer you give to that question, I hope that Easter makes you tremble at least a little bit. Not because it's a one-day-and-done-deal each spring but because it is the announcement of God's victory over all things that conspire against us—discouragement, pain, loneliness, disease, loss, injustice, hatred and, yes, even death. Even death. The final word belongs to God. It's a word of triumph. It's the bold assertion that nothing can defeat the power of God's love and grace.

And if that isn't enough to make you and me tremble, tremble with amazement and with joy, then we are a sad and sorry bunch indeed.

Kenneth L. Gibble lives in Chambersburg, Pa.

Easter

by Robert C. Jones

Cold, metal-blue, the sky,
warmed only by the patch of gold
in the west.
High above, a silver plane
draws its long clean plume
against the night—
a banner,
pure and white.
I see it turn,
in one long slow sweet curve.
The crystals of its trail
are gold and amber, amarynth—
a path of tears and fire—
drawn homeward toward the dawn.

Robert C. Jones lives in Warrensburg, Mo.

The Emmaus visitor and th

by Byron Rempel-Burkholder

After an evening out, Melita and I had just put our children to bed when we noticed our answering machine blinking. There were five messages from Norman, who had called from a truck plaza across town. In the first four, his slow, monotone voice told us he would call again in half an hour. The last call indicated he would set out along the Yellowhead Trail toward our house.

Crazy guy, I thought. There's no place to walk on the Yellowhead, a freeway that runs through Edmonton. But then, Norman would do something like that.

I drove the half hour to the truck stop, scanning the dark, desolate medians and narrow shoulders for a homeless-looking figure. I spent another 20 minutes at the truck stop scouring the bar, the video lottery terminals, the restaurant and food store. No luck.

His eyes sparkled with humor and intelligence, as if he knew the answer to a riddle. This was a man wounded into silence, but in his healing he radiated beauty.

When I returned home, we speculated that he may have run out of quarters to call, and might be panhandling his way to British Columbia.

Through the night, Norman loomed in my thoughts. Who was he? What was he doing in my life? Why were we out on this night when he called?

The first time we thought of hosting Norman in our home, I was afraid he might do something to our children. I had never met him, but Melita had counseled him while he was in prison. She had kept in touch with him as he braved the world outside.

From his letters I knew he was a survivor. He did not return to crime. He lived by himself, finding some kind of community in the ex-inmates and staff of a post-prison support ministry. He once sent us a snapshot a rooming house buddy had taken. It showed a 30-year-old man in a lumber jacket, with clashing baseball cap, standing in a backyard beside a chain-link fence.

Melita assured me his medication would keep at bay whatever criminal instincts he might have had at one time. At heart he was a gentle person, she said. Still, the unknowns were unsettling: Medication for mental illness. Welfare. Hitchhiking. Prison, for a crime that Melita had forgotten and he never talked about.

Nothing spooky: When I came home one day and met Norman in our kitchen, fear gave way to intrigue. His hair stood short and scraggly, as if he had cut it himself—but there was nothing spooky about him. Norman was timid, not the chatty, rambling person of his letters. He spoke only when spoken to, in a smooth, gentle monotone.

His eyes sparkled with humor and intelligence, as if he knew the answer to a riddle. This was a man wounded into silence, but in his healing he radiated beauty.

I came to appreciate his prolific correspondence. His letters arrived once or twice a week, reporting the details of the day of his writing: the temperature outside, what TV programs he had been watching, what country and western songs he was listening to. He even reported the times he took a break from writing to make himself a cup of instant coffee.

The second time he visited our house, he came as a friend. It was the coldest weekend of the winter, 15 below zero. Norman was moving back to Winnipeg—hitchhiking. He stopped at our house to "warm up."

His hair had grown long from neglect, and he wore a week's growth of beard. I had an inkling this might be Jesus in disguise: the homeless one, the innocent one, the one who shows up unexpectedly—the one we, like Zacchaeus, must climb above the crowd to see, only to hear him invite himself to our house.

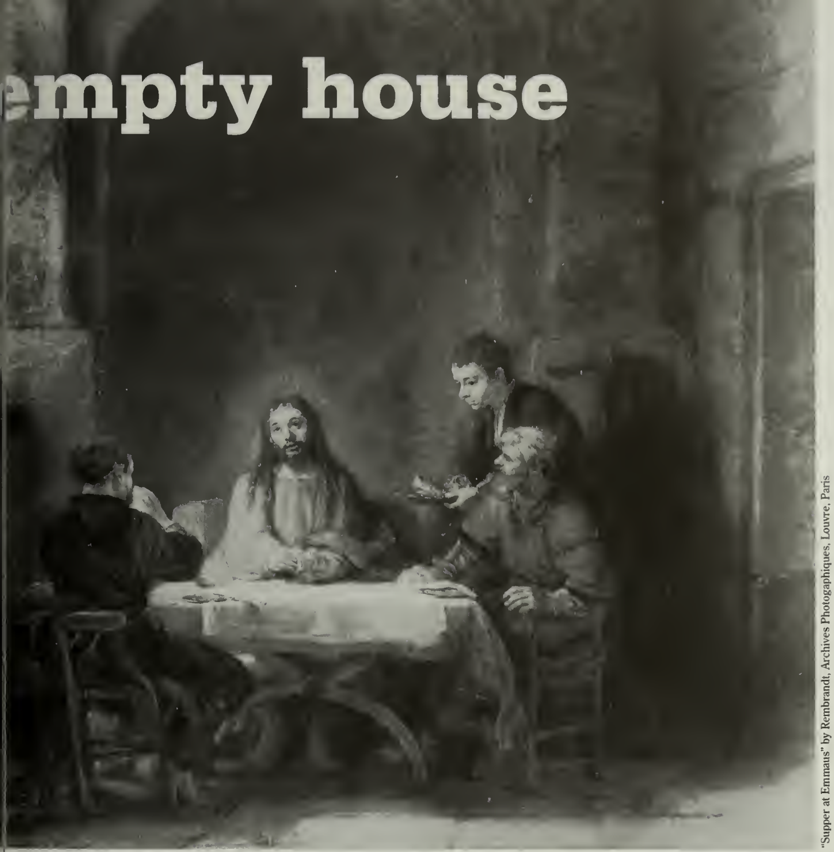
We knew Norman was part of the family that weekend when we managed to squeeze him in on our family pass to the provincial museum. Norman suddenly assumed responsibility for our preschool children, who raced ahead while their parents tried to look more closely at the exhibits.

Norman never spoke of how he felt about the undoubtedly rare cultural activity—Did he enjoy museums? Did he prefer car racing?—but we knew some parenting instincts were being called forth. "Joel, Joel," he said with inadequate volume as our son Joel disappeared around a corner. Or he compliantly held the hand of our daughter Hannah, who had found in him a receptive audience for her stories.

But with Norman, the easy friend to have around, came a fearsome prospect. Norman might stay. Could we handle being so close? We realize now, in retrospect, that fear got the better of us. At the end of that museum weekend, we told Norman we would take him to the truck plaza the next day, where he would likely find a ride to Winnipeg. Norman hadn't told us when he would leave. We made that decision for him—patronizingly, as those who were mentally well and had lives to live—on the coldest weekend of the year.

When I dropped him off at the truck stop, I

mpty house



"Supper at Emmaus" by Rembrandt, Archives Photogaphiques, Louvre, Paris

told him to call us if he didn't find a ride. Please God, I prayed silently, don't let that happen. That did not assuage my guilt, so I handed him $20, which he took with gratitude.

"Good luck, Norman," I said.

"Goodbye," he said.

"Depart from me," Peter had told Jesus, "for I am a sinful man." I too had ridded myself of the Christ who comes in the guise of the homeless and the mentally challenged.

The guilt remained, and we vowed we would open our lives wider to Norman next time. We would help him settle in Edmonton. We would advocate for government welfare assistance for him. We would find him a good rooming house downtown. And we would be the home he could count on for emotional support. Next time.

We were still waiting for "next time" that same Easter season, when Norman's flat, innocent voice on the answering machine pierced the silence of our empty house. "Uh, hi, this is Norman and I'm at the truck plaza, ugh, and I'm wondering if you could pick me up, uh. ..."

But I never found him that night.

Like the resurrected Jesus who comes to us on the Emmaus road, Norman disappeared all too easily and all too soon. And we were left with some inexplicable sensation of panic. Our hearts burned within us, and we would have—if only.

We were left in that ambiguous time after the resurrection, when Christ appears in flashes bright enough to awaken insight but brief enough only to arouse a longing for at least a complete dinner together. And real enough that we must go out and tell someone that the Lord is risen indeed.

Byron Rempel-Burkholder lives in Newton, Kan.

Author's note: Later, Norman found his way back to prison in British Columbia. The reasons are not clear, but we're sure it has to do with his longing for home. He never explained what happened that night in Edmonton. His frequent letters remind us that this story is not over yet.

Like the resurrected Jesus who comes to us on the Emmaus road, Norman disappeared all too easily and all too soon.

Community plants peace in the desert

Arizona garden is ground for growing relationships

TUCSON, Ariz.—A labyrinth of garden plots is springing to life in the desert, growing from the vision of community members, a congregation and a Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) unit for the neighborhood they share. Together, they are planting peace.

Located in Tucson's Corbett neighborhood, the Zuni Community Garden is a joint effort of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, the Tucson MVS unit and neighborhood residents. The garden is located on Zuni Street, but the name has deeper significance. Zuni, the name of a Native American tribe, means "to good health," a fitting name for a vegetable garden designed to deepen relationships in the neighborhood.

The idea had been floating around for several years, says Shalom co-pastor Gary Daught, but it took off quickly following an organizing meeting last August. "The critical mass of people, ideas and energy was right there for an idea that had been simmering for a number of years in the back of people's minds," he says.

The congregation and MVS unit started by talking to community leaders, the local elementary school principal and others. "There were common threads in what people wanted: activities for youth after school to keep them out of trouble, and a place for neighbors to gather and get to know each other," says MVS worker Jennifer Christophel Lichti.

Daught suggested creating the garden as a cross-shaped labyrinth, which has historically been used for meditation and prayer walks. Shalom had used a prayer labyrinth during Lent two years ago. And last year on Good Friday, the congregation made a pilgrimage through the stations of the cross that began in the yard of the church and led into the sanctuary, he said. The garden is now located in that yard.

"Through our conversations ... all of these things—the community garden, a meditation walk, the labyrinth, the stations of the cross—converged for me," Daught says. "We decided to separate the plots with a pathway, and the pathway forms a labyrinth."

The 18-plot garden was staked out on Feb. 15. On March 11, about 15 people gathered for a work day at the garden. Some dug a trench for an irrigation system. Others dug post holes and prepared individual plots for planting.

GCMC and MBM photo by Nate Christophel Lichti

Thomas Schlabach helps prepare a plot in a community garden in Tucson, Ariz. He is the son of Tina Schlabach, co-pastor of Tucson's Shalom Mennonite Church, which has joined with the local Mennonite Voluntary Service unit and local residents to start the garden.

A $4,700 grant from a neighborhood organization will pay for the fence, irrigation system and scholarships for individuals or families unable to afford the garden plot rental fee of $8 per month, which includes irrigation costs.

The garden committee hopes to plan a gardening party once a month and have a garden coordinator available for assistance.

Kathy Clow, who has lived in Corbett for 30 years and has been active in planning the garden, looks forward to gardening with her grandchildren. "I think it's going to be a real good connection point between the grandchildren and me," she says. "I hope to involve their friends, too.

"The garden can help families connect with each other and work together in positive ways."

The garden is an initiative of the MVS-supported Zuni Peace Center. The center also operates a bike club for neighborhood youth, which is led by MVS workers Abbie Landis and Colin Bock.

"The next stage is exploring development of a community justice board that would work at restorative justice for misdemeanors committed by neighborhood youth," says Lichti.

MVS hopes to send a new worker in August to be the peace center's organizer and program development coordinator.

"The project is amazing," Lichti says. "You can feel God working in it."—*Bethany Swope for GCMC and MBM news services*

More-With-Less anniversary planned

When *More-With-Less Cookbook* by Doris Janzen Longacre first appeared in print in 1975, it struck a chord with its call for every household to help solve the world food crisis.

"We hoped we would be able to sell the first printing of 10,000 within a year," recalls Paul Schrock of Herald Press, the book's publisher.

But within the year, 45,000 more books had to be printed. More than 800,000 copies have been sold, generating $600,000 in royalties for Mennonite Central Committee.

Now Herald Press is inviting comments from readers and cooks for a 25th-anniversary edition: Are there special memories or anecdotes connected with the cookbook or specific recipes? How have recipes been adapted? Has the more-with-less philosophy affected other areas of life?

Send responses to More-With-Less Project editor, 924 Chestnut St., Akron, PA 17501, <abstau@desupernet.net> or visit the web site at www.mph.org/mwl.—*MCC News Service*

New AAMA staff person wants to empower, connect congregations for work in new church

HAMPTON, Va.—The move to Hampton from Youngstown, Ohio, was only the beginning for Kenyetta Aduma. As the new staff person for the African-American Mennonite Association (AAMA), she plans on doing a lot of traveling.

"One of the major things is to advocate for the congregations on the [denominational level] … and vice versa," says Aduma, who began the full-time position on Feb. 1.

That will mean attending a lot of meetings of denominational boards and committees and visiting a lot of churches. AAMA, an associate group of the current Mennonite Church, has 53 member congregations from coast to coast.

The staff position is new, born out of concerns about the status of racial/ethnic congregations in the emerging Mennonite Church USA. Aduma is financially supported by the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board and the Mennonite Church program boards.

"We are enthusiastic about the possibilities this staff role can play in the life of the church," says Ron Byler, Mennonite Church USA associate general secretary.

Aduma is a member of Berean Fellowship Church, an Ohio Conference congregation in Youngstown. A lawyer, she has worked for the city's community development department and for a social services agency. Aduma moved to Hampton to set up her office in Calvary Community Church, where AAMA president Leslie Francisco III is the lead pastor.

Until taking the staff position, she had been an AAMA board member and so had seen the organization's needs evolve. "AAMA had ideas … but not a staff person who could take these things and run with them," she says.

One idea is to better link member congregations, some of which are geographically isolated, such as Anderson (S.C.) Mennonite Church, Open Door Mennonite Church in Jackson, Miss., and Peace Community Mennonite Church in Detroit. "There was a feeling we could be better connected," says Aduma, who is working on organizing regional rallies of AAMA members.

Other responsibilities will include coordinating AAMA's biennial assembly and staffing the office, which helps provide leadership training, mentoring and other services. "The most important piece to us is to give a hands-on approach to people who call in," Francisco says.

He also welcomes the addition of Aduma to handle administrative responsibilities. "It frees me as president of the organization to focus more time on the advocacy realm," he says. *—Rich Preheim*

There was a feeling we could be better connected.

—Kenyetta Aduma

Tea room tips make for big change

EPHRATA, Pa.—Customers leaving tips at the Nav Jiwan International Tea Room aren't adding to the income of their servers. Instead, they are adding to the educational opportunities of children overseas.

For the past 16 years, customer gratuities at Nav Jiwan, located in the Ten Thousand Villages store in Ephrata, have gone through Mennonite Central Committee's Global Family program to sponsor children in Calcutta, India. In 1999, nearly $34,000 in tea room tips benefited 166 students.

Global Family provides educational assistance and vocational training to children around the world. The program last year helped some 3,000 children in 19 countries.

"The tip money we are sending is so useful," says Nav Jiwan store manager Richard Sarker. "I wish we could give more; there is so much need."

Sarker traveled to India last fall to visit the recipients of Nav Jiwan tips, such as Shamin Akhtar. Blind since an early age, Akhtar received Global Family funds to attend Calcutta Blind School. As an only child and the family's primary wage earner since the death of his father, Akhtar has learned chalk making and runs a public telephone booth.

Sarker, a native of Bangladesh who worked with Global Family there from 1986 to 1992, sees one of the greatest tasks as spreading the word about Global Family and its impact on the lives of so many children. "I wish I had more time to talk with our customers to inspire them," he says. "One time I was talking with a number of customers, and I explained that our tips go to children in India, and they decided to leave a little more."

Global Family started in 1953 to assist orphans in South Korea, with 200 sponsors funding the original project. Since then, emphasis has shifted to general support of children by funding education, such as paying for teachers' salaries, literacy progrems, school supplies and other efforts.*—Elizabeth Landis for MCC News Service*

In Lebanon, Palestinian refugees wait

MCC programs offer alternatives for confined people

Palestinians have no place to go. And they are not wanted. This is the crux of the whole problem.

—Sylvia Haddad

SIDON, Lebanon—In 1948, in the midst of the conflict that produced the state of Israel, Hussein Saleh Miaari threw together a few belongings and left his village in northern Palestine for Lebanon. He expected to return a few weeks later when the fighting ended.

Fifty-two years later he's still waiting.

Miaari left as a young man, with a new wife and a young child. The child, their first, died on the journey. Now Miaari is a weathered old man, grasping the keys to his former home, just 33 miles away in Akbara.

"I depend on God," the 73-year-old man says through an interpreter. But he speaks with resignation about ever returning to Akbara.

Miaari is far from alone. An estimated 200,000 to 400,000 Palestinian refugees live in Lebanon, adding significantly to the small country's population of 3 million. Seventy-five thousand people live in Ain El-Helwe, the largest refugee camp, which is located within the city of Sidon. Ain El-Helwe began as a temporary holding place but has slowly become a concrete camp, teeming with people and surrounded by Lebanese guards.

A narrow, graffiti-covered alley leads to Miaari's rented home in Ain El-Helwe, which he shares with 20 family members. "I don't own anything here. This is what I own," Miaari says with passion, pointing to some limp, yellowing documents. These are the deeds to his land—about 175 acres—in what is now Israel. He raised sheep and goats, while maintaining an olive orchard.

In his early years in Lebanon, Miaari worked as a farm laborer and then in construction. For the last 18 years he hasn't worked at all. There are 72 kinds of jobs Palestinians can't hold, such as teaching, engineering and banking. What's left typically are low-paying manual labor jobs. Unemployment is endemic among refugees.

In an attempt to provide economic liberation, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has been the major supporter of Salaam School, which teaches vocational skills to refugees in Ain El-Helwe. "We are not solving problems for the Palestinians," says school director Khalid Miaari. "But we are giving them some hope."

Nisreen Hussein, 20, hopes to be part of the one-third of Salaam graduates who have found good, full-time work in recent years. She is learning computer skills and wants to work as a secretary or typist once her studies conclude later this year. If nothing else, she will be able to do typing projects from her home.

The school also offers courses in Arabic literacy, English, radio and television repair, barbering and hairdressing. Courses run from four months to one year. Half the 110 students are women.

MCC also supports a Palestinian community health group based at a refugee camp in Beirut. Health care, like education, is restricted to what the United Nations Relief and Work Agency, which runs the camps, provides. Palestinian refugees can't become Lebanese citizens.

"Palestinians have no place to go. And they are not wanted," says Sylvia Haddad, who directs a Beirut school that integrates Palestinian and Lebanese children. "This is the crux of the whole problem.

"The children are being born with a grudge. There's a lot of despondency, hopelessness among the youth."

Says school director Khalid Miaari, "What I look for is to live as a human being, to be respected, to have all the rights of a human being."—*Carol Thiessen of MCC News Service*

Ryan Miller

Getting cheeky

Espri Beauregard, a Goshen (Ind.) College senior from Paoli, Ind., paints a dragonfly on second-grader Eric Camarillo during Kids Day on March 31, part of the college's Earth Week. More than 200 area school children attended the day's activities on the environment. Earth Week, sponsored by the college EcoPax Club, also included lectures, bird-watching, an environmental film and cleaning an area park.

Organizers of new congregational peace program hope to give material trial run next spring

CHICAGO—The journey toward a new congregational peace training program will proceed on the information superhighway.

Six of the nine writers for the Second Mile "congregational peace process" met last month in Chicago for a workshop to examine topics and brainstorm about analysis, resources, worship ideas, biblical material, stories and activities. The writers, who are from across the United States and Canada, were assigned topics on which they are to work over the next several months.

But the writers will have cyber-assistance. Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S., one of the project's participating agencies, has made available an interactive web site where writers can submit drafts of their materials and respond to each other.

In mid-June, Second Mile editor Carol Penner will start pulling the material together for use in pilot congregations in a year. Organizers hope to have the project completed and available to all congregations by the summer of 2002.

Second Mile is being developed cooperatively by the Commission on Home Ministries, Mennonite Church Peace and Justice Committee, Church of the Brethren and MCC Canada as well as MCC U.S.

"The focus of Second Mile is on inspiring congregations to actively make peace and to reflect on the peace activities in which they are already involved," Penner says.

At the Chicago workshop, the writers and the Second Mile steering committee spent substantial time looking at the 14 previously chosen topic areas: militarism/violence in the media, global economy/poverty, racism, sexism, crime/restorative justice, family violence/abuse, refugee issues/hospitality, service/advocacy, conflict transformation, Native concerns, North American economic issues/sharing resources, spiritual aspects of peace and violence, inclusiveness in the church and community, care for the environment.

Second Mile organizers want to include related stories (300 to 500 words) and worship materials from individuals and congregations. Send contributions by June 15 to Penner at Box 861, Vineland, ON L0R 2C0, Canada, or email <mile2@becon.org>.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Bluffton students have bullish year

For the fifth consecutive year, the Bluffton (Ohio) College Student Investment Club's endowment has outperformed the stock market, achieving an annual return of 30.33 percent compared with the Standard & Poor's 500 index return of 21.04 percent.

Club members, who meet monthly, research new investments while monitoring current holdings. The club invests only in companies that are in keeping with college values; for example, industries that promote alcohol, tobacco or military connections are not considered.

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EMU professor receives peacemaking award

INDEPENDENCE, Mo.—International mediator John Paul Lederach has been recognized by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints for his more than 20 years of global peacebuilding work. Lederach received the RLDS International Peacemaking Award April 6 at the church's biennial world conference in Independence.

Lederach is professor of conflict studies and sociology at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va. He is the founding director of the school's conflict transformation program. Lederach has extensive peacebuilding experience in areas of protracted conflict in Latin America, Africa, the Philippines, Northern Ireland, Spain and the United States.

"This award is a real honor, both to be recognized and for the encouragement that it provides personally and for the cause of worldwide peace and reconciliation efforts," said Lederach, who is also the author of 13 books.

Previous award winners include Marian Wright Edelman, Jane Goodall and M. Scott Peck.

Three honored at Mennonite Health Assembly

WILLIAMSBURG, Va.—Mennonite Health Assembly presented three awards during the annual gathering of health-care workers, held March 23-26 in Williamsburg.

Beryl H. Brubaker received the Anabaptist Health Care Award from Mennonite Mutual Aid for her four decades of service in health, educational, community and church settings. She is vice president for enrollment management at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Jubilee Association of Maryland, Wheaton, Md., received the Organizational Award of Merit from Mennonite Health Services. Jubilee, started in 1978 by Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church, serves 75 individuals with developmental disabilities.

Dorothy Gish received the Trustee of the Year Award from Mennonite Health Services. She is chair of Messiah Village, a Brethren in Christ retirement community in Grantham, Pa.

CPT members go to New Brunswick, Puerto Rico

CHICAGO—Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) has sent a violence-reduction team to New Brunswick for three months in the wake of a dispute over lobster fishing between aboriginal and nonaboriginal people.

"Our goal is to reduce the risk of people being hurt this spring," says CPT member Janet Shoemaker. "We will be visible in the community, meeting with fishers, police and regulators and reporting on any abuses we observe."

A CPT delegation last month visited the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, where the U.S. Navy has practiced military maneuvers since 1941. A stray bomb killed a civilian last April, producing widespread opposition to the military's presence. Opponents have established camps around the bombing area and have also blockaded the Navy's Camp Garcia. —*CPT News Service*

Hesston College revamps administrative duties

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston College will install a new administrative structure effective July 1, filling new positions with current employees. The college will be divided into administrative areas of academic affairs, advancement and planning and resources, each to be overseen by an executive vice president.

Current academic dean Marc Yoder will become the executive vice president for academic affairs, including the faculty, registrar and student life. Director of development Elam Peachey will be executive vice president for advancement, which will cover admissions, alumni relations, communications and development. Wendell Sauder, now associate director of development, will become executive vice president for planning and resources, which will include the bookstore, business office, computer services, campus facilities, food service and human resources.

by the way ...

Twenty-six Mennonite Central Committee relief sales and three Houses Against Hunger sales in the United States raised $3.7 million in 1999.—*MCC 1999 Workbook*

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Events

"Rooted in Peace" conference on preaching and teaching peace, May 1-2, Worthington, Ohio. Sponsored by Ohio Conference Peace-Justice-Service Commission. Speakers: Michael and Addie Banks, James Krabill, Susan Mark Landis, Charles McCarthy, Andre Gingerich Stoner, Regina Shands Stoltzfus. Contact ohmennconf@aol.com or 330-857-5421.

Office 2000 biennial gathering of support staff from Mennonite agencies and conferences, May 11-13, North Webster, Ind. Resource people: Malinda Berry, Marlene Kroeker, Marlene Kropf. Contact: ethelmh@mbm.org or 219-294-7523.

Women in Pastoral Ministry conference, May 31-June 2, Goshen, Ind. Theme: "Remembering Our Dreams." Speakers: Elaine Bryant, Martha Smith Good, Juanita Nunez, Jane Roeschley. Contact 219-294-7523 or MBCM2@juno.com.

"Streams in the Desert" retreat for families coping with long-term mental illness, June 9-11, Bluffton, Ohio. Contact: PDLeichty@cresources.org or 877-214-9838.

Central District, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan, Ohio conferences joint annual meeting, June 22-24, Goshen, Ind.

Iowa-Nebraska, Northern District joint annual meeting, June 22-25, Freeman, S.D.

Pacific Northwest Conference annual meeting, June 22-25, Moses Lake, Wash.

Pacific Southwest Conference annual meeting, June 23-24, San Jose, Calif.

Workers

Good, Randy, was licensed March 26 as co-pastor of Morning View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Kauffman, Elaine, was installed Feb. 27 as pastor of First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Quesenberry, Jon, was licensed Feb. 27 as pastor of Cornerstone Church of Albermarle, Waynesboro, Va.

Robinson, David, was licensed Feb. 13 as pastor of Hildebrand Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Simonsick, Bob, began a pastorate at Calico Rock (Ark.) Mennonite Church on April 15.

Swarey, Allen, was licensed Feb. 27 as assistant pastor of Hildebrand Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Births

Franz, Kali Savannah, Feb. 15, to Kirk and Shannon (Gudenkauf) Franz, Kansas City, Kan.

Frederick, Mikayla Regina, Feb. 19, to Kim and Tim Frederick, Harrisonburg, Va.

Havens, Joelle Mae, March 13, to Matthew and Patricia (Fanton) Havens, Wellsville, N.Y.

Hertzler, Emily Nicole, March 7, to Keith and Vivian (Yoder) Hertzler, Powhatan, Va.

Hostetler, Caleb Daniel, March 15, to Julie (Martin) and Keith Hostetler, Marshallville, Ohio.

Keim, Erin Janae, March 27, to Kirby and Yvonne (Moyer) Keim, Sarasota, Fla.

Kim, Shenan Seo-Ron, March 10, to An-Sung and Sun-Kwon Kim, Harrisonburg, Va.

King, Andrew Ray, March 24, to Gerald and Vicki (Gingrich) King, Quarryville, Pa.

Krehbiel, Katie Anne, March 16, to Sue Gilliland and Kevin Krehbiel, Inman, Kan.

Kropf, Colton John, March 12, to Larry and Tracey (Brenneman) Kropf, Kitchener, Ont.

Mathew, Kristin Schrock, March 24, to Johncey and Kristin (Schrock) Mathew, Lancaster, Pa.

Miller, Dylan Patrick, March 20, to John and Marla (Sauder) Miller, Archbold, Ohio.

Miller, Grace Melissa, March 16, to Chris and Julie (Robertson) Miller, Mount Joy, Pa.

Murray, Christianna Elaine, March 19, to Debbie and Steven Murray, Bluffton, Ohio.

Paetkau, Anna Marie, March 10, to Brenda (Sawatzky) and Don Paetkau, Goshen, Ind.

Rhodes, Erich Leon, March 23, to Gretchen (Newcomer) and Kirby Rhodes, Lancaster, Pa.

Spiller, Edmund Reese, March 2, to John and Paige (Comstock) Spiller, Cumberland, Va.

Stauffer, Owen Daniel, March 18, to David and Shannon (Warfield) Stauffer, Orrville, Ohio.

Marriages

Cordell/Seville: Lynn Cordell, Chambersburg, Pa., and Johanna Seville, St. Thomas, Pa., March 25 at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg.

Franz/Hackney: Kara Franz, Overland Park, Kan., and Troy Hackney, Overland Park, March 25 at First Lutheran Church, Manhattan, Kan.

Gerard/Winterhalt: Danielle Gerard, Mitchell, Ont., and Ray Winterhalt, Mitchell, March 11 at Mitchell.

Jantzi/Phelps: Terry Jantzi, Harrisonburg, Va., and Elizabeth Phelps, Yarinacocha, Peru, March 25 at Willow Street (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Lehman/Nolt: Suzanne Lehman, Kidron, Ohio, and Shawn Nolt, Apple Creek, Ohio, March 25 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Blank, Sylvester, 86, Lititz, Pa., died March 28. Spouse Roberta Fisher Blank. Parents: Samuel and Nancy Byler Blank (deceased). Other survivors: children Irvin, Harold, Calvin, James, Doris Lefever, Thelma Delong, Brenda Buckwalter; 17 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 31 at Landis Homes, Lititz.

Cressman, Cecil, 82, Waterloo, Ont., died March 20. Spouse: Violet Francis Cressman. Parents: Noah and Catharine Brubacher Cressman (deceased). Other survivors: children Doug, Rob; two grandchildren. Funeral: March 23 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Erb, Laurane Kipfer, 83, Sarasota, Fla., died Feb. 3. Spouse: Allen Erb (deceased). Parents: Amos and Rebecca Kipfer (deceased). Survivors: children Mahlon, Larry; five grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 7 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Gascho, Earlus, 82, Kitchener, Ont., died March 18. Spouse: Sylvia Swartzentruber Gascho. Parents: Daniel and Lavina Steinman Gascho (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Anne Daly, Terry; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 22 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Gehman, Luke, 70, Pennsburg, Pa., died March 23 of multiple myeloma. Spouse: Anna Geissinger Gehman. Parents: Jacob and Katie Gehman (deceased). Other survivors: children Rachel Ferguson, Lowell; five grandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Gross, Myrtle Krout, 81, Souderton, Pa., died March 24 of cancer. Spouse: Henry Gross. Parents: William and Stella Meyers Krout (deceased). Other survivors: stepson Richard; four stepgrandchildren. Funeral: March 28 at Souderton Mennonite Homes Chapel.

Grove, Dwight, 85, Greencastle, Pa., died March 25 of cancer. Spouse: (1st) Evelyn Helm Grove (deceased); (2nd) Leona Wehry Grove. Parents: John and Almeda Landis Grove (deceased). Other survivors: stepson James Davis; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 29 at Greencastle.

Hersh, Harry, 86, Line Lexington, Pa., died April 1. Spouse: Dorothy Hersh (deceased). Survivors: children David, Ruth Delp, Esther Kollars; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 6 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

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Keller, Reuben, 61, Quakertown, Pa., died March 21. Spouse: Bernice Derstine Keller. Parents: Reuben and Evelyn Weisel Keller (deceased). Other survivors: children Brent, Duane, Terry, Lori Farrell; five grandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown.

Lehman, Janet Schloneger, 64, Kidron, Ohio, died Feb. 26 of metastatic cancer of the pancreas. Spouse: Merlin Lehman. Parents: Alvin and Gladys Schloneger (deceased). Other survivors: children Linda Thomas, Kathy; three grandchildren. Funeral: March 1 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Linder, Eva, 88, Louisville, Ohio, died March 24 of a heart attack. Parents: Eli and Lizzie Schmucker Linder (deceased). Funeral: March 28 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Nussbaum, Rhoda Gerber, 84, Dalton, Ohio, died March 24. Spouse: George Nussbaum. Parents: Phillip and Pauline Gerber (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Lou Roth, Richard, Ronald, Ray; 12 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Schlegel, Earl Joseph, 76, Tavistock, Ont., died March 9. Spouse: Florence Bender Schlegel. Parents: Aaron and Barbara Sommer Schlegel (deceased). Other survivors: children Carol Drudge, Pauline Shank, Peter, Brenda Jewitt, Clare, Harold; 15 grandchildren. Funeral: March 13 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Steckly, Rose Bender, 51, Tavistock, Ont., died March 14. Spouse: Ron Steckly. Parents: Elva and Wallace Bender. Other survivors: children Rochelle, Ryan. Funeral: March 18 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Widrick, Sherwood, 72, Lowville, N.Y., died Feb. 16 of cancer. Spouse: Rachael Zehr Widrick. Parents: Joseph and Anna Moser Widrick (deceased). Other survivors: children Veronica Wetmore, Harlan, Norbert, Philip, Patrick; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at Lowville Mennonite Church.

Wilson, Harold, 83, Mount Jackson, Va., died March 24, Spouse: Elizabeth Wilson. Parents: Maurice and Lelah Dayson Wilson (deceased). Other survivors: children James, Kathleen Becker, Judith Bell; five grandchildren.

Wingard, Esther Spory, 78, Hollsopple, Pa., died March 2. Spouse: Paul Wingard (deceased). Parents: Harry and Katie Croyle Spory (deceased). Funeral: March 5 at Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, Pa.

Yoder, Mahlon, 95, Middlebury, Ind., died March 6. Spouse: (1st) Minnie Mae Miller Yoder (deceased); (2nd) Amanda Schrock Yoder (deceased). Parents: John and Elizabeth Troyer Yoder (deceased). Survivors: daughter Miriam Heath; 16 grandchildren: 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 9 at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind.

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- **Virginia Conference's** Northern District is seeking a ***bivocational pastor*** with church planting skills and interests to lead the Crest Hill congregation at Wardensville, W.Va. Contact Michael Shenk, Overseer, 540-434-0578.

- **Community Mennonite Church** of Lancaster is seeking a ***pastor*** beginning November 2000. Our congregation is an active one of approximately 250. Candidates must have a deep commitment to Anabaptist beliefs and a passion for peace and justice.

  Send resume to Mary Jane Fox, 43 Clover Lane, Palmyra, PA 17078; 717-838-6963; email millerfox@supernet.com

- **River East MB Church** is seeking additional members for its ***pastoral team***. Women and men with gifts in the areas of pastoral care, discipling, preaching, coordination and outreach are invited to apply.

  Please direct inquires or CVs to Pastoral Search Committee, River East MB Church, 755 McLeod Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2K 0B8. Inquiries can also be made by calling the church at 204-663-5096; email schubert@pangea.ca

- **Shalom Ministries Inc.**, Archbold, Ohio, is seeking a person to assist with ***public relations, marketing and fund-raising efforts*** in the northwest Ohio area. This exciting new part-time position will become a vital part of insuring the continuation of Shalom Ministries' work with individuals in our community.

  Individuals interested in exploring this position should contact Shalom Ministries, 22450 Co. Rd. F, Archbold, OH 43502; 419-445-1552.

- **Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church**, Abbotsford, B.C., is currently looking for a ***bilingual pastor (German/English)***. This is a full-time position available immediately, in an urban community, with an average of 200-300 attending each service. The pastor will coordinate and direct all German ministries, duties and special events and oversee the joint unity for both our German and English congregations and church administration.

  Please direct applications (with resume and references) to Search Committee, Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, 2051 Windsor St., Abbotsford, BC V2T 6L9; fax 604-850-8455; email eemc@rapidnet.net

- **West Philadelphia Mennonite Fellowship**, Philadelphia, is seeking a half-time ***pastor*** to join its pastoral team. Candidate must be committed to an Anabaptist understanding of faith and desire to live and work in an urban area. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

  Inquiries/resumes to: WPMF Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Renee Warnick, 404 S. 9th St. Apt. 1M, Philadelphia, PA 19147; fax 215-844-6655; email warnick@flashcom.net; web site http://welcome.to/wpmf

- **Hesston College** seeks ***admissions counselor***. Qualifications: good communication and organizational skills, commitment to Mennonite higher education, familiarity with the Mennonite Church. Responsibilities: develop and implement recruitment plan for assigned territory, build relationships with top prospects and applicants, telemarket, travel, represent Hesston College at churches and high schools. Bachelor's degree preferred. Position available early summer.

  Send resume and references to Clark Roth, Director of Admissions, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. For more information email clarkr@hesston.edu or phone 800-995-2757.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 accredited school accountable to local Mennonite churches, seeks people committed to Jesus Christ to fill positions that will equip students for a life of discipleship. The following positions are available in August 2000: ***Business administrator*** to plan and oversee programs and activities in finance, technology and facility improvement, and to participate in public relations and development endeavors. ***Math/science teacher(s)*** for middle school and high school courses. ***5th grade teacher*** for self-contained classroom. ***Part-time Spanish teacher*** for high school courses.

  Please contact Glenna J. Hershberger, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; 610-286-0353; email pp002979@mindspring.com

- **Needed: *Executive director*** for a new alliance of 5 church-related retirement communities in southeast Pa. B.A./B.S. (master's preferred), 5+yrs. Executive leadership in healthcare or related field. Must take initiative and work collaboratively with 5 other CEOs. Ability to bring together diverse resources and systems and think "outside the box." Administrative and financial skills important. Knowledge of Anabaptist theology and good moral character.

  Send resume to Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; email timstair@compuserve.com by May 30, 2000.

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29 churchwide gatherings are planned throughout the United States, March-June 2000. Join the celebration for the church God is forming among us!

April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FL. Speaker–Bernie Wiebe
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK. Speaker–Duane Beck
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA. Speaker–Dwight McFadden, Jr.
May 5-7, First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO. (RMMC annual sessions) Speaker–June Alliman Yoder
May 7, First Mennonite Church, Morton, IL. Speaker–Ervin Stutzman
May 7, Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH. Speaker–Jim Schrag

For more information contact Shelley Buller 316-283-5100 ext. 249 or e-mail ShelleyB@gcmc.org

March 5, First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS.
March 12, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, PA.
March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA.
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, NB,
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN.
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN.
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX.
March 26, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN.

April 2, Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA.
April 2, Norristown New Life Mennonite Church, Norristown, PA.
April 2, Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, PA.
April 2, Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, D.C.
April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA.
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN.
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL.
April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FL.
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK.
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA.

May 5-7, First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO. (RMMC annual sessions)
May 7, First Mennonite Church, Morton, IL.
May 7, Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH.
May 14, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, OH.
May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA.
May 21, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA.

June 4, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD.
June 8-11, Casselton Mennonite Church, Casselton, ND. (NCC annual sessions)
June 11, Community Mennonite Fellowship, Corning, NY.
June 22-23, Moses Lake High School, Moses Lake, WA. (PNMC annual sessions)
June 24, First Mennonite, Reedley, CA (PSMC annual sessions)

by Rich Preheim

Divorce, Swedish style

After 469 years together, the government of Sweden has ended its formal ties with the nation's official church, the Church of Sweden (Lutheran), a move that *Christianity Today* says is designed to revitalize the denomination.

Official figures place the Church of Sweden's membership at about 90 percent of the country—but only because, until four years ago, everyone born in the nation was automatically registered as a church member. Recent surveys say only about 1 percent of the population attends Church of Sweden services weekly. Only 5 percent of the population regularly attends any Christian church.

"The institutional church in Sweden is so conservative—not theologically but in the sense that it is resistant to change—that people are fed up with it," says Michael LeRoy, a Wheaton (Ill.) College professor who has studied Scandinavian church-state relations. "Many see it simply as useful for baptism, marriages and funerals."

A state tax has supported the church since 1531.

Judging faith—I

Ask and ye shall receive, goes the old maxim. But that's not the case for longtime anti-war activist Philip Berrigan and three other Catholic pacifists facing jail time for using hammers and blood to damage two Air National Guard warplanes in a December 1999 protest.

Following the four defendants' trial in a Baltimore courtroom, Judge James T. Smith Jr., went far beyond the sentencing guidelines requested by assistant state's attorney Mickey Norman. According to *National Catholic Reporter,* Norman had asked for a sentence of six to 12 months for the 76-year-old Berrigan; Smith gave 30 months. Norman had requested two to nine months for Susan Crane, 56, and Stephen Kelly, 50; they received 27-month sentences. The fourth protester, Elizabeth Walz, 33, got 18 months, exceeding the one month proposed by Norman.

Smith, who has been honored by a Catholic lawyers group, also ordered the defendants to share in paying $88,622 in restitution and imposed a cash bail of $90,000 each "to be paid by the defendants only" should they appeal.

Judging faith—II

It wasn't the type of suit that comes off the rack in a Sears store. Facing litigation charging that it discriminated against repairmen who wanted Saturdays off to observe the Sabbath, Sears, Roebuck & Co. has settled on a $445,000 agreement with the New York attorney general, reports the web site www.religiontoday.com.

At least five people, including an Orthodox Jew and a Seventh-day Adventist, said Sears denied them jobs or otherwise discriminated against them when they asked for Saturdays off for religious reasons. Sears claimed its repairmen were needed most on Saturdays. But an investigation by Eliot Spitzer, the New York attorney general, found that most repair work is done on Tuesdays.

According to the settlement, the company will pay $225,000 for employer education programs, $120,000 for training for those who observe the Sabbath on Saturday and $100,000 to cover the costs of Spitzer's investigation.

Judging faith—III

A federal judge has felled a lawsuit by a group of Minnesota loggers by ruling that environmental activists aren't pushing religion when they seek to reduce logging in national forests. The suit, against two environmental groups and the U.S. Forestry Service, sought to declare "deep ecology"—a radical environmental school of thought—as a religious belief that breaks the separation between church and state when it leads to federal policy.

But Judge James Rosenbaum ruled that not only does the case lack merit, it was intended to harass the defendants, reports *Earth First! Journal.* The plaintiff's attorney, Stephen Young, said he will appeal. "There is a limit in our democratic system to the extent to which religion can drive government policy," he said.

The case of the disappearing church workers

Where did everybody go, wonders Cae Yuan of China's Three-Self Movement (the country's Protestant church). When he visits congregations in the eastern province of Henan, he repeatedly hears cries for more preachers, evangelists and other church workers. Yet more than 200 lay leaders have been trained in the vicinity in recent years. The problem isn't a growing church requiring more workers. A major factor, Amity News Service says, is that church workers, particularly those in rural areas, face so many demands they rarely have time to supplement their meager church incomes by working the land or doing other odd jobs. To escape poverty, they eventually have to leave home and become migrant workers.

Tidbits

- The Vatican is considering declaring Martin Luther King Jr. an official Christian martyr.—*Christian Century*
- Thirty-three percent of married couples responding to a recent survey said the partners belonged to different denominations at the time of their engagement.—*Family Ministry Journal*
- Translation of the *Jesus* film into Ojibway is expected to be completed this year.—*Intotemak*
- As an alternative to Pokemon, a company has developed King's Kids Trading Cards, featuring 44 Old and New Testament characters.—*Children's Ministry*
- Nearly 31,000 students last year participated in InterVarsity ministries on some 560 college campuses in 49 states.

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J. Lorne Peachey

Easter is 21 Tupperware containers in your refrigerator

Imagine the emotional and psychological trauma Jesus' disciples must have experienced during Holy Week. Having staked their reputations and futures, even their lives, on a young leader who declared himself the Son of God, they watched in agony as he was abused and crucified without so much as even trying to defend himself. No wonder Peter cursed and swore as he denied knowing Jesus and another disciple ran from the scene naked rather than be identified with him.

The disciples' trauma was so deep they couldn't recognize Easter when it did happen. Jesus had to appear to them over and over—in the garden, on the road to Emmaus, in rooms behind locked doors—to convince them of his resurrected reality. Even after his ascension back to heaven, the disciples kept to themselves out of fear and disbelief. It took a mighty wind of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost to convince them Jesus was still alive and worth preaching about.

That's not unlike how we respond today. How easy it is to dwell on the pain and the evil in our lives. How easy to miss the possibilities of the new life of Easter because we cannot see beyond the disappointments and brokenness of our own Good Fridays.

We are often so blinded by the pain and darkness of our lives that we miss the signs of new life that daily surround us, new life made possible by Jesus' triumph over death.

This has been especially true for me this year. My wife, Emily, has been diagnosed with four chronic autoimmune illnesses. Then just when we were learning how to live with rheumatoid arthritis, Sjögren's syndrome, fibromyalgia and osteoporosis, we discovered that, after eight years of being dormant, cancer in her breast had moved to her lungs.

The days of chemotherapy that followed were difficult ones. In my depression one Sunday evening, I went to the refrigerator to do what I usually do when life seems out of control: eat. I opened the door and was confronted by an array of Tupperware, Cool Whip and cottage cheese containers. Instead of eating, I counted. The joy of Easter began to sink in when I got to 21.

These containers held leftovers of food our congregation had brought us the previous week. There were new dishes from friends and neighbors that had come in that evening. As I stood there and counted, I recognized these as expressions of love, caring and wanting to be supportive. Along with cards, emails and prayers, these expressions had been coming to us all along, but it was not until I saw them massed as plastic boxes in our refrigerator that I could begin to go beyond the gloom of my Good Friday to the joy of Easter.

I suspect I am not alone. We are often so blinded by the pain and darkness of our lives that we miss the signs of new life that daily surround us, new life made possible by Jesus' triumph over death in the resurrection.

We live in a world that seems more violent and deadly every year, with even young children shooting each other. Yet this Easter we can celebrate the fact that one of the top gun manufacturers has agreed to put locks on all new firearms, a fragile peace continues in Northern Ireland, and Palestinians and Jews keep talking rather than shooting in the Middle East.

Life in our denomination this past year has also been rocky, with some questioning whether the merger of two Mennonite groups can really happen or whether they want to be part of what results. Yet progress continues, with structures and programs beginning to come together. And a district conference vote to withdraw from the process did not pass (see our March 28 issue).

Meanwhile, Emily and I have successfully made it through chemotherapy. The other diseases are also coming under control. I am beginning to get an inkling of the new love and joy that may flood our lives.

Easter 2000 is more for me than the celebration of Jesus' victory over death. It is also an acknowledgment of the little signs of new life that continue in my world. I am determined not to miss them because of the doubts and depressions of my Good Fridays. I do so by remembering those 21 Tupperware containers in our refrigerator.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

April 25, 2000

parables of the kingdom

learning from other faiths

page [illegible]

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15 Conscientious objection to military taxes
16 Taking Elián González to the bathroom

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

To eat or not to eat

Thank you for printing John Zimmerman's article on vegetarianism ("The Peaceable Kingdom at Hand," March 28). Zimmerman argues persuasively for God's concern with animal welfare, and we're deluding ourselves if we think that modern meat production is cruelty-free. Animal welfare aside, there are powerful environmental and health benefits of meatless diets as well. I think it is simply tradition, even more than nutritional concern, that is the greatest obstacle to widespread vegetarianism.

Every time the church shares a fellowship meal, delivers food to a sick person or celebrates Communion, it affirms that eating is an act of sprital significance. What we choose to eat both reflects and affects our spirituality, and I hope our choices are not determined solely by convenience or habit.—*Amy Kauffman, Houston*

Moving past all the problems I have with biblical interpretation in Zimmerman's article, I want to point out one difficulty I have with hailing vegetarianism as a moral path. If one is to argue from an animal rights position, one must realize that the large number of domesticated animals in the world likely could not survive without human intervention. In fact, if the world's population were to become vegetarian today, many species would die out. These species do, in an awkward way, depend on the meat-producing economy for survival.

I do not speak as one that opposes vegetarianism. In fact, I cook vegetarian, but I also eat meat.—*Phil Fuller, St. Paul, Minn.*

Reloading the canon

I'm a bit puzzled by Rodger Schmell's statement that the Apocrypha has never been included in the canon of Scripture. Was the Bible the early church used not canonical? Acts (especially Stephen's sermon), Paul (especially in Romans) and Jude indicate that their canon was the Septuagint. (Jude's borrowing goes even further.) Of course, we can argue that the Septuagint was not canonical, even though its usage by the early church—and our own New Testament writers—suggests that it was. It's also interesting to note that a whole raft of 16th-century Anabaptists also used these Apocrypha writings as canon.

So it's somewhat of a puzzle that some of the books of the early church's Bible should be considered noncanonical by us.—*Vern Ratzlaff, Saskatoon*

Holding on

A construction worker was building a bridge to join the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church when someone holding a rope rushed up, handed the worker one end of the rope, tied the other end around their waist, said, "We've decided to accept same-sex covenanted couples into our church," and jumped off the side of the bridge. The construction worker managed to hang on and then heard a voice from below: "Hang on, my life is in your hands."

Just as the construction worker was beginning to struggle with the weight of this new responsibility, another person holding a rope rushed up, handed the worker one end of the rope, tied the other end around their waist, said, "We will not be part of a denomination that allows congregations to accept same-sex covenanted couples," and jumped off the other side of the bridge. The construction worker managed to hang on and then heard a second voice from below: "Hang on, my life is in your hands."

The strength to hang on dwindled, and the weight threatened to tear the construction worker in half. Choose your ending:

- Discouraged by the sudden weight of responsibility, the bridge builder became immobilized. After hanging on as long as possible, considering many suggestions from onlookers and offering a few suggestions to those at the end of the ropes, the bridge builder finally felt the ropes slip away. Exhausted by the effort and in despair over not being able to save those at the end of the ropes, the bridge builder no longer had the energy to continue the project.
- Knowing it was not possible to pull both parties back onto the bridge because of insufficient strength and because the one at the end of one rope refused to use the same bridge as the one at the other end, the builder felt forced to let go of one rope in order to save the other. But which one? The one that weighed the least? The one that was most important? The one who was the closest relative?
- In a sudden moment of inspiration the bridge builder thought, "If I could only tie these two ropes together, I could get back to work." The inspiration provided just enough energy to pull the ropes together and tie them in a knot. Relieved, the worker leaned over the edge of the bridge and shouted, "You'll have to work it out yourselves," and returned to the work of bridge building.—*Kurt Horst, Somerset, Pa.*

theMennonite

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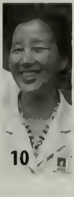

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readers say

Estrangement

I am writing in response to the exchange between Jim Compton-Schmidt (Readers Say, Feb. 22) and Mike Waters (Readers Say, March 21) about Kings View Center in Reedley, Calif. I was a staff psychiatrist at Kings View from Feb. 19, 1987, to April 8, 1991. I continue to maintain an office in Reedley.

Yes, the psychiatric hospital closed its doors on Oct. 1, 1991, and there has not been a hospital on that site since. Yes, there is a mental-health facility on that site now, a therapeutic group home for adolescents. To give some idea of the difference between a hospital and a group home: In 1990 there was a clinical staff of 24 psychologists and psychiatrists; now there is one part-time psychiatrist. In 1990 there were six full-time, certified activity therapists; now there are less than two full-time, non-certified staff members providing activities.

What is a bigger question than the change is the fact that the change is news to the Mennonite community, especially in Reedley. The hospital was a proud accomplishment of a dedicated community of faith. But by the time I arrived in Reedley in 1987, there was an almost complete estrangement between the hospital and the church community. An example of this was the fact that despite great need, there were no church volunteers at the hospital. In 1990, when a chaplain and I attempted to initiate a volunteer program, we received almost no support from the hospital administration, the Kings View board or the Reedley church community, despite the fact that we met with each of them and kept them all informed of our needs and actions.

I would be interested in learning the history of this estrangement and understanding the forces that maintain this separation.—*Michael V. DeLollis, Fresno, Calif.*

Cover photo
by Luke Golobitsh

Parables of the kingdom and other faiths

How should Christians relate to people of other religions or of no religion?

by Alain Epp Weaver

On the first Sunday of every month, a motley group of 20 to 30 people gathers on a windswept vacant lot in the middle of the Stateway Gardens housing project on Chicago's South Side. Members of the Vigil Against Violence, these people come together to remember those who have been killed on the South Side during the past year. Several banners bear the thousands of names of those who have died since 1994.

A community leader speaks for a few minutes on her opposition to violence. Though many of those who attend the vigil are active, committed Christians, the vigil itself doesn't have an exclusively Christian flavor. Jews, Muslims and avowedly secular people also attend to form a community of resistance to violence and hope in a better future, a sign of God's peaceable kingdom.

The Vigil Against Violence is but one example of activities that bring faithful Christians into partnership with non-Christians. As North America becomes increasingly diverse religiously, the number of such interfaith coalitions will also grow. Partnerships with non-Christians are also commonplace in the church's relief and development work. In Lebanon, Jordan and Palestine, for example, Mennonite Central Committee enters into arrangements with Muslim groups to promote peacebuilding efforts and bring aid to the needy. Working with people of other faiths is simply an unavoidable condition of the church's mission in a multifaith globe.

Working with people of other faiths is simply an unavoidable condition of the church's mission in a multifaith globe. It can also be an uncomfortable experience.

Working side by side with non-Christians, however, can be an uncomfortable experience. In the course of the give and take of daily dialogue, Christians can be challenged by the words and deeds of non-Christian friends and colleagues. Mennonites working in Islamic contexts, for example, have seen God's Spirit at work among Muslims as they fast spiritually and physically during their holy month of Ramadan and as they witness to God's sovereignty over all of creation and history.

How are we to understand theologically the experience of receiving truth from non-Christians? One popular answer is that of the pluralist: There are many, equally valid paths to God. If the pluralist is correct, then explaining the reception of truth from non-Christians becomes a straightforward affair. But the pluralist option is problematic, at least for most Christians, because it involves a devaluation of traditional Christian claims about Jesus Christ. The vast majority of Christians throughout history have proclaimed Jesus Christ as the exclusive and final revelation of God. Pluralists, in contrast, proclaim that God is revealed not only in Jesus Christ but also outside of him.

Sectarian isolation: To give up claims about the exclusivity and finality of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ will seem to most Christians too high a price to pay for explaining how we hear what we take to be God's truth from non-Christians. Much contemporary debate on interreligious matters thus seems to leave traditional Christians in a bind: Either one affirms a plurality of revelations, of which Jesus Christ is but one example, or one proclaims Jesus Christ as the one true Word of God and retreats into sectarian isolation, denying in advance that non-Christians might speak true words.

But is this forced option genuine? Might there not be another way of approaching the question, one that would allow Christians to proclaim the exclusive character of God's revelation in Jesus Christ while also being open to the witness of non-Christians? I suggest we look to the writings of Karl Barth, the great Swiss theologian, for a helpful alternative. Barth's conception of true human words as "parables of the kingdom" points toward a stance that both proclaims the exclusiveness of God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and is open to new truth from non-Christians (see Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, Vol. IV).

Fundamental for Barth is the premise that no human words or actions by themselves say what God says in Jesus Christ: not the Bible, not church preaching and teaching, not the words of non-Christians. Jesus Christ, God's one true Word, stands above all human language and relativizes it. The truth of the Bible and church proclamation is based solely on God's free, electing grace in Jesus Christ, not on their character as human words. They are true to the extent that they are spoken by Jesus Christ as parables of his kingdom.

We Christians have heard God's Word in Scripture and the church's worship. On what theological grounds might we expect to hear it spoken outside of church walls? Our answer returns to Christology. Pluralists tend to have a low Christology: Jesus, for them, is but one prophet among others, one word of God rather than the Word of God. What, in contrast, would a high Christology mean for the question of truth in other religious? One answer would say that Jesus Christ is God's one true Word, and that therefore all religious words that do not bear his name are false. This answer, however, does not take Christ seriously enough. By denying that true words about God may be spoken by non-Christians, it restricts Christ's lordship to the church.

Witnesses to God's kingdom: Barth, in contrast, argues that because Christ's lordship extends over all of human history and creation, Christians should expect to hear true words about God spoken by non-Christians. These non-Christian words do not stand alongside Jesus Christ as alternative revelations of God but stand within his lordship: They are spoken by him as parables of his kingdom. Even though non-Christians do not acknowledge Christ's lordship, they are still subject to it and can be made witnesses to God's kingdom. The true words they speak and the deeds they perform stand within God's Word in Christ rather than outside of him.

All well and good, one may say, but how do we know whether or not the words and actions of non-Christians are parables of the kingdom? We can't answer this question in advance of concrete dialogue, says Barth; to set up supposedly fool-proof criteria for discerning what non-Christian words are true parables of God's kingdom is to try to control the movement of God's free, electing grace. We can ask if the word or deed in question harmonizes with Scripture. We can look to see how it fits the whole of church teaching. We can examine what practical fruits the non-Christian word brings forth in the lives of non-Christians.

True parables will always lead Christians back into Scripture, but sometimes this will mean that Christians will have to give up their preconceptions about what Scripture says. True parables will sometimes harmonize with church teaching, but at other times the witness of true parables may call the church to re-examine what it teaches. Above all, the Christian must ask whether or not the words and deeds of non-Christians point to Christ. Of course, we Christians must ask the same question of our own words and deeds.

The receptivity to God's word from outside the church's walls demanded by Barth's parables of the kingdom squares well with the traditional Mennonite emphasis on nonresistance. Christians must forsake a prideful insistence that God's word is spoken only through us, not through others; we must abandon our resistance to hearing that word spoken by non-Christians.

In Christ, God has judged all human talk about the divine and found it wanting; through Christ, God has elected our words to proclaim the kingdom. Our gracious election by God should prompt in us humility rather than triumphalism, should make us attentive to signs of God's grace outside the church's walls. In humility, then, we must enter into dialogue with people of other faiths, prepared not only to give witness to Christ but to receive a witness to Christ and his kingdom from those with whom we converse. Overseas workers with Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite mission boards as well as North American Mennonites living in interfaith environments are engaged in such nonresistant dialogue. May all of us, as Mennonite Christians, pledge to be nonresistantly open to God's free word as we interact with our neighbors and coworkers of other faiths.

Because Christ's lordship extends over all of human history and creation, Christians should expect to hear true words about God spoken by non-Christians.

Alain Epp Weaver and Sonia Weaver, his wife, are country directors for Mennonite Central Committee in the West Bank.

Coming clean

Why and how Christians should confess their sins to one another

by Jan Johnson

I ignored Helen as she lingered by the door waiting to talk to me. I kept talking to my friend. Helen was a whiner, and I wasn't in the mood.

But as my husband, Greg, and I drove home, I felt convicted about cold-shouldering Helen. Why had I ignored her?

"I need to be accountable for how I treat Helen," I said. "I promise to pay attention to her next time."

Greg's smile showed his confidence in me and propelled me to the telephone book when I got home. I called her, and we talked.

A few years ago, I would have felt guilty about ignoring Helen but then forgotten it. But that's changed since I've started confessing my sins to other Christians and making myself accountable to them.

A few years ago, I would have felt guilty about ignoring Helen but then forgotten it. But that's changed since I've started confessing my sins to other Christians and making myself accountable to them.

Still, confessing sin isn't easy, and Bible teachers don't offer many pointers. We do have this promise from God: "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed" (James 5:16). But how can telling the world our faults help us?

More than "dumping": Confessing sin can easily turn into simply dumping our problems on other people. It's important to state definite goals of how we want to change. I learned this from a friend who listened to my confessions and routinely asked, "So, what are you going to do about it?"

This is the heart of accountability—coming up with reasonable and practical steps to overcome sin. For example, another friend confessed that she was attracted to a married man. When I asked what she was going to do about it, she said, "I have to stop fantasizing."

"Does that seem possible at the moment?" I asked.

She admitted it didn't.

"Why don't you substitute the fantasy with another activity?" I suggested. "Make it something that's related to the root cause of your fantasizing."

She figured out that the attraction was rooted in her marital troubles, which she and her husband were working on. I knew that she wanted to walk closer to God, so I suggested that when she was tempted to fantasize, she should substitute this thought: "God loves me and delights in me" (an adaptation of Psalm 147:11). She agreed to check in with me every other day on her progress.

Her fantasizing stopped—partly because her goal was so reachable. She didn't promise to stop fantasizing, only to rechannel her thoughts. It also helped that she knew she had to report to someone—and that someone was praying for her.

Accountability blues: Even though accountability is a powerful tool, it terrifies most of us. Here are some reasons why.

It feels terrible. The first few times I confessed a sin to someone, it felt as if a volcano were erupting inside me. Now it's like the prick of a needle from the painkiller I received after surgery. It's nothing compared to the tremendous relief that follows. After you get used to having a clean conscience, a secret sin hurts more than confession ever will.

I don't want to make a big deal out of every little sin. You may not have to. Being accountable to others is like calling in the reinforcements for more difficult, stubborn sins after you've confessed to God and still failed.

My confession can hurt other people. Some impressionable, young Christians can be hurt or confused by our confessions. In a group setting, I often pull a mature person aside and talk to her privately.

When I've wronged people, I ask God to guide me in knowing whether I should confess directly to them or not. Sometimes I wait until I've worked through my problem so I don't burden them with something they can't do anything about. (Don't confuse confession with confrontation. Confessing sin is admitting what I've done wrong and committing myself to change. Confrontation is bringing other people's sins before them.)

I can't find anyone to confess to. Closeness isn't necessarily a prerequisite to confession. It's a spiritual exercise that requires a mature Christian listener, not a deep friendship.

I look for "safe" people who act as a cheerleader, not an executioner; listen instead of play armchair psychologist or preacher; do not brush my faults off with, "everybody does that now and then"; believe in God's power to change me.

Here are the methods three people used to find "safe" people.

Look for honesty and faith. When Cindy discovered that her husband of 20 years had been secretly bisexual, she hated him. Cindy needed to confess this terrible feeling and promise to work on it, but she didn't know who could handle such sensational news. She chose her Bible study leader, Martha, for two reasons. Martha seemed real. She often admitted her own shortcomings to the group. And Martha prayed a lot. Cindy knew that Martha could help her lean on God's power.

Test the waters. Share something small and see how people react. When Patty and I first became friends, she mentioned that she felt bad for yelling at her kids earlier that day. I didn't know it, but she was testing me. I "passed" by empathizing and discussing ways to handle that problem.

Now we check in with each other to see how we're doing. We know we've found in each other someone who will understand, pray for and expect improvement from the other.

Recall previous comments. When Dave and his wife divorced, they disappeared from church. So Greg and I invited Dave for dinner and he spilled his story and his fault in the break-up. Dave told us that he knew we were "safe" because of a casual comment I'd made years ago. I'd said something about how Christians shouldn't take potshots at divorced friends who were already hurting.

All three of these people understood that Christian growth is too important to waste time being spiritual frauds with others. How much better to seek out "safe" listeners and point ourselves on a path of growth.

Jan Johnson is the author of Enjoying the Presence of God *and* When the Soul Listens. *She lives in Simi, Calif.*

MENNOS AT WORK

Wendy Funk Schrag, Newton, Kan.

Congregation: First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Occupation: dialysis social worker

Years in occupation: 9

Why I do what I do: As a social worker at two dialysis clinics, I receive much professional and personal reward from my work. Economic and racial barriers often break down as people support each other through their common bond of living with kidney disease. I work with people who are young and vibrant and those at the end of life. I am inspired by the courage of these people. Struggling to maintain a normal lifestyle while on dialysis is difficult. I am able to work with people in a number of systems: their families, churches, communities and the dialysis clinic. Many times people who start dialysis feel they will never be healthy again. I enjoy helping people realize they can improve their physical and emotional health. This often includes encouraging them to find employment and regain their physical strength through exercise.

The role of faith in what I do: People ask, "Why me?" when they have to start dialysis to maintain their lives. Spiritual issues, such as anger at God, go along with this. Once they know that if they don't choose dialysis they will die from kidney failure, people face their mortality. It's a privilege to work with people in this time of spiritual struggle, which can often lead to a deeper commitment in their faith. Some dialysis patients choose to stop dialysis if they feel it is not helping their quality of life. I help them and their families determine when and if this is an appropriate choice. These times often include reconciliation and further deepening of faith and internal peace. I cannot approach these situations without evaluating my own feelings surrounding death, so I have grown more at peace with my mortality. Patients who have a strong spiritual base find it easier to roll with the punches that living with a chronic illness brings. This has been a strong witness to me.

Editors' note: *We invite others to answer the questions on this form. Send your responses and a photo of yourself to Gordon Houser,* The Mennonite, *P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.*

Changing times, changing time frame

Nashville 2001 will raise profile of convention delegates

When preparing for St. Louis 99, Topeka (Ind.) Mennonite Church finalized its selection of congregational delegates less than five months before the convention. Fast-forward to spring 2000. Even though the next convention, to be held in Nashville, Tenn., is still 14 months away, Topeka has already picked its representatives.

That changing time frame is evidence of changing times as the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) continue the process of transformation into Mennonite Church USA.

In preparation for the Nashville convention, to be held July 2-7, 2001, GC congregations and MC area conferences are being asked to select their delegates by May 1, 2000—much earlier than in the past. As of April 18, one MC area conference and 30 GC congregations had submitted their lists of delegates to denominational offices.

A primary reason for the early deadline is to have time to solicit feedback on the delicate issue of membership from the people who will cast the final votes on the guidelines for the new denomination.

"We want to know as firmly as possible before we get to Nashville ... how folks are going to respond to the proposal coming forward," says George Stoltzfus, Mennonite Church USA general secretary. "We do not want to be surprised at Nashville."

The Constituency Leaders Council is working on the membership guidelines and is expected to release a preliminary draft at its May 24-26 meeting in Kansas City. The plan is to send the draft to the delegates for them to discuss with their congregations and conferences and then respond before the CLC's September meeting.

The CLC needs to send its proposal to the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board next spring, the last step before it goes to the Nashville 2001 delegates for approval.

While the membership guidelines is the major issue facing Nashville delegates, their feedback may be requested on "an armlong list" of other transformation-related issues, says moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman.

This new role for the delegates may not be a one-time affair but rather an ongoing element of doing church business. "If you want to make important decisions every two years, you really should have a feedback loop you can use ... in between [conventions]," Stutzman says.

Topeka pastor John Hockman would welcome that. In the past in his and many other GC congregations, the selection of delegates often hasn't been done until spring or early summer before a convention, limiting the amount of time available to address issues. "It's a very difficult thing for them to communicate with the congregation," Hockman says.

The changes for Nashville aren't quite as striking for MC area conferences, which have historically chosen their delegates earlier and held meetings for them to prepare for convention business. Nevertheless, the Nashville deadline is requiring delegates to be selected well ahead of the Mennonite Church's normal December deadline.

A higher profile for delegates in Mennonite Church USA would entail more responsibilities, something that Stoltzfus admits could be viewed as an imposition on church members' time and energy. At the same time, he says, an expanded role for delegates could encourage them to keep attuned to the issues before the denomination.

"My hope is ... that we can conduct this sort of preassembly surveying and engagement with our delegates, rather than our delegates coming in cold," Stoltzfus says.

That is already happening at Grace Mennonite Church in Enid, Okla., where pastor Steve Cutting is promoting greater denominational involvement. He and the congregation's three deacons will be delegates at Nashville.

"Generally speaking, Grace has not participated in these conventions," says Cutting, the congregation's pastor since November 1999. "I want them in it, especially now with the [transformation] changes."—*Rich Preheim*

> **If you want to make important decisions every two years, you really should have a feedback loop you can use ... in between [conventions].**
>
> —*Ervin Stutzman*

Delegation representation: a comparison

The General Conference Mennonite Church delegate assembly is made up of representatives from each congregation, one delegate for every 30 congregational members. Mennonite Church delegates represent area conferences, one for every 500 conference members. The proposed delegate body for Mennonite Church USA will include both congregational and conference representatives.

Fiscal year ends with healthy financial picture, most Mennonite Church agencies report

ELKHART, Ind.—For the second consecutive year, the former Mennonite Church General Board office received more income from MC area conferences than they were asked to give. Giving to the board, now the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board, exceeded projected income of $336,231 by $3,235, the second highest total ever received.

"We are thankful for your gracious spirit of sharing for the work God is calling us to do together," said George B. Stoltzfus, Mennonite Church USA general secretary, in a response to conference leaders.

The board's budget includes the coordinating work of the MC program boards and area conferences and some subcommittees, such as the historical committee.

Most MC agencies also reported a healthy financial picture for the 1999 fiscal year:

- Mennonite Board of Missions received nearly $6.5 million in contributions, the third consecutive year of increased giving.
- Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries posted its best year in three years, with income falling just $515 short of expenses.
- Mennonite Mutual Aid assets grew to nearly $1.2 billion in 1999, with the Praxis mutual funds showing particularly robust growth.
- Mennonite Publishing House also reported that initial projections look good for the recently completed fiscal year.
- Last year's congregational and conference giving to Mennonite Board of Education and the Racial Ethnic Leadership Education program dropped a combined 4.7 percent, from $251,600 to $239,600.

MC racial/ethnic ministries reported varying financial experiences in the past fiscal year. Congregational giving to United Native Ministries increased substantially, an upswing not seen by the other two groups, the Hispanic Mennonite Convention and African American Mennonite Association.

Through the Partners in Ministry program, MC program boards, racial/ethnic groups and schools cooperate in requesting financial support from conferences and congregations. The Partners in Ministry contributions budget for the current fiscal year is nearly $6.7 million. Many agencies also have additional sources of contributions and revenue income.

Correction: Christopher Ryan Graber, a freshman at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., won a national debate championship March 24-26. He was misidentified in the April 11 issue.

'Tis the sale season

Six relief sales in nine days raise $1.4 million for MCC

AKRON, Pa.—From North Dakota to Florida, California to Pennsylvania, six relief sales on consecutive weekends have generated more than $1.4 million for the work of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

The weekend of March 31 to April 1 featured four sales. The Nebraska sale in Aurora raised $147,600; the Upper Midwest sale in Minot, N.D., raised $36,500; and the Pennsylvania sale in Harrisburg raised about $380,000. All three sales had activities both days.

The first Florida relief sale was held April 1 in Sarasota, grossing nearly $100,000.

The next weekend was the West Coast sale in Fresno, Calif., which raised about $225,000, and the Kansas sale in Hutchinson, which earned more than $525,000.

Forty-three relief sales are scheduled to be held this year in 22 states and five provinces. In addition to the Sarasota event, first-time sales are planned for Atlanta on Oct. 28 and Buffalo, N.Y., on Nov. 11.—*MCC News Service with Rich Preheim*

Maria Hershberger

Finding the words

Hondurans (left to right) Linda de Robelo, Suyapa de Perez and Ondina Murillo work on children's Sunday school curriculum during a March 26-31 workshop near Guatemala City. Writers from Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras gathered to prepare the third and final cycle of "Enseños tus caminos" (Teach Us Your Ways), which is being developed by Latin American Anabaptist congregations. "Our work is not the work of one day, one month or even one year," said Guatemalan pastor and writer Carlos Rodas in a morning reflection. "It is a work that will continue to nurture the lives of children and strengthen the church." The curriculum's first cycle is already in use. The materials for 11- to 13-year-olds is being developed in Central America. South American writers are producing the materials for the 5- to 7-year-olds and 8- to 10-year-olds.

Agency helps fill cracks in Chinese system

Mennonite support bolsters social service assistance

NANJING, China—Cai Chun Hua never imagined being unemployed. Growing up in communist China, she had expected a guaranteed job for life in a system the Chinese jokingly call the "iron rice bowl."

But that bowl has cracked, and, in 1995, Cai fell through. After years as a hotel receptionist, the hotel closed and she was dismissed.

"I couldn't see any hope," Cai, 44, recalls. "I couldn't eat. I was sick."

China is in transition. Traditional wooden buildings have been bulldozed to make way for high-rise apartments. Trees that graced boulevards have been chopped down to accommodate more cars. In cities, severe green Mao uniforms of earlier decades have been replaced by miniskirts, platform shoes and the newest fashion accessory, the cell phone.

Along with these outward changes have come tremendous social changes. The Chinese government once cared for the needs of all its citizens. Now this grasp on the everyday details of life has loosened.

Middle-aged women, such as Cai, attended school during China's Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and '70s. Their education consisted mainly of chanting political slogans and planting rice in the countryside, nothing that prepared them to compete for a job in the economic powerhouse China has become at the dawn of the 21st century.

Amity Foundation, a Chinese agency with Christian roots, is one of the first private social service agencies to help fill the cracks in the iron rice bowl. Its programs are wide-ranging: training medical workers in Tibet, surveying needs of blind people, organizing elderly women to visit orphanages to cuddle neglected babies.

This year marks Amity's 15th anniversary. Since its inception, the foundation has been supported by China Educational Exchange, an inter-Mennonite program. CEE members are Commission on Overseas Mission, Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Central Committee and MBMS International, the North American Mennonite Brethren mission agency.

Through a nine-week job training program run by Amity Foundation with the Nanjing Labor Bureau, Cai has found a new career as a nursing assistant. Today she bathes and feeds post-operative patients at the Nanjing Drum Tower Hospital.

Even the existence of Cai's position is a sign of changing times. In the past, family members would have camped at the hospital to care for the patient. Now, with families of only one child, an aging population and both spouses employed full-time in demanding jobs, families would rather pay for these services.

"This job is dirtier than working in a hotel. I do things even patients' families don't want to do," Cai says. "But I can bear it. This job is a great help."

Mennonite Central Committee is currently working with Amity's rural development department and the Chinese and Canadian governments on poverty alleviation in four regions of China.—*Pearl Sensenig of MCC News Service*

This job is dirtier than working in a hotel. … But I can bear it.

—Cai Chun Hua

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Church communicators take home contest awards

CHICAGO—The visual identity guidelines for Mennonite Church USA were named best of class in print media at the Religion Communicators Council awards ceremony in Chicago March 31. The project was directed by J. Ron Byler, Mennonite Church USA associate general secretary, and Dave Linscheid, former General Conference Mennonite Church communications director. They also received a certificate of merit for their communications plan for the St. Louis 99 convention.

Mennonite Board of Missions captured four honors, including a certificate of excellence for the design of *Missions Now* magazine and a certificate of merit for the St. Louis 99 newsletter.

Canner and camp pioneer dies at 89

SARASOTA, Fla.—Jess Kauffman, who helped start the first widely used portable meat canner and was active in Mennonite camping, died April 4 at his home in Sarasota. He was 89.

In 1946, he and other members of Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church conceived and built a portable meat canner to travel to Mennonite communities to preserve food for shipment to Europe. Mennonite Central Committee used the canner for about 25 years until it was replaced.

Kauffman later moved to Colorado where he founded Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp near Divide. He was director of Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich., from 1966 to 1973 and of Lakewood Retreat Center from 1976 to1979. Kauffman is the author of *A Vision and a Legacy: The Story of Mennonite Camping, 1920-1980,* published by Faith & Life Press.

EMU to hold commencement ceremonies

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) will commence the spring graduation season April 29-30, handing degrees and certificates to 379 undergraduate, graduate and seminary students.

Eastern Mennonite Seminary will hold its 51st annual commencement April 29, with 23 students expected to receive degrees or certificates. Million Belete, former president of Mennonite World Conference, will give the address.

Three hundred fifty-six undergraduate or graduate students are scheduled to receive degrees during EMU's 81st annual graduation ceremony on April 30. Ron Mathies, Mennonite Central Committee executive director, will give the commencement address.

Goshen student honored for community work

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College sophomore Tammy Parker has been recognized by a state organization for her contributions beyond the campus community. She will receive one of two Richard J. Wood Student Community Commitment Awards from Indiana Campus Compact at an April 27 ceremony in Indianapolis.

Parker, from Buhler, Kan., was one of 10 nominees for the award. She has been involved in Big Brothers/Big Sisters for the past two years, mentored a Goshen High School student and was active in organizing the college's inaugural service-learning day. Indiana Campus Compact is a consortium of 29 colleges that seeks to involve students and faculty in their communities.

Ground broken for MCC center in Ohio

KIDRON, Ohio—About 50 people gathered March 25 on the campus of Central Christian High School to break ground for the Ohio Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Activity Center.

The 12,000-square foot building will be the home to a retail thrift store, a quilting and weaving room and a warehouse for MCC material resources. The estimated cost without contributed material and labor is $420,000. The facility is located on land leased from Central Christian.

by the way ...

Montana's 39 Hutterite colonies, with about 4,000 people, produce 60 percent of the state's pork, 50 percent of its eggs and 17 percent of its milk.—*The Economist*

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Births

Bontreger, Lucas Anthony, April 2, to Fran (Poling) and Myron Bontreger, Goshen, Ind.

Chandlee, Adeline Kay, March 21, to Cindy (Miller) and Todd Chandlee, Iowa City, Iowa.

Eby, Elizabeth Malinda, April 2, to Rachel (Nussbaum) and Rick Eby, Salem, Ore.

Gacy, Shawn Michael, March 30, to Linda (Wile) and William Gacy Jr., Harleysville, Pa.

Kauffman, Leah Kathleen, Feb. 14, to Alan and Tisha (Beyeler) Kauffman, West Liberty, Ohio.

Martin, Kyle Nicholas, Feb. 26, to Brenda (Irvine) and Reg Martin, Elmira, Ont.

Miller, Branden Drew and Trevor Jon (twins), March 27, to Barbara (Yutzy) and Randall Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Jacob Anthony, April 2, to Darryl and Laura (Chua) Miller, Plain City, Ohio.

Mumau, Shelby Mae, March 27, to Jeff and Shawna (Wagler) Mumau, Hartville, Ohio.

Ortiz, Alexander James, March 25, to Joe and Tonie (Goans) Ortiz, Goshen, Ind.

Resler, Breanne Renee, April 4, to Kraig and Nicole (Lengacher) Resler, Wakarusa, Ind.

Riley, Colin Doyle, March 6, to Alison (Munson) and Layne Riley, Beaver Crossing, Neb.

Marriages

Brinkman/Schumacher: Dan Brinkman, Lima, Ohio, and Elizabeth Schumacher, Pandora, Ohio, April 8 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Doby/Graber: Jerome Doby, Topeka, Kan., and Jocelyn Graber, Topeka, April 1 at Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka.

Goering/Ortiz: Lisa Goering, Phoenix, and Benjamin Ortiz, El Paso, Texas, April 1.

Rosenblum/Stoltzfus: Thomas Rosenblum, Natchez, Miss., and Linda Stoltzfus, Uniontown, Ohio, March 25 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Troyer/Wise: Anthony Troyer, Hartville, Ohio, and Angela Wise, Uniontown, Ohio, March 30 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Beiler, Florence Kurtz Smoker, 78, New Holland, Pa., died April 6. Spouse: (1st) David Smoker (deceased); (2nd) Jesse Beiler. Parents: David and Carrie Beiler Kurtz (deceased). Other survivors: children Shirley Smoker Beiler, David Smoker; stepchildren Newton Beiler, Ray Beiler; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Birky, Ivan, 80, Strang, Neb., died March 24. Spouse: Roine Birky. Parents: Jacob and Alma Eichelberger Birky (deceased). Other survivors: children Jim, Genie Tirrel, Dona Imhoff; 12 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: March 28 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley, Neb.

Classen, Peter, 76, Philadelphia, died March 22. Spouse: Hulda Loewen Classen. Parents: Peter and Sarah Reimer Classen (deceased). Other survivors: children Tim, Sheryl Armington, Bev Hesterberg; six grandchildren. Memorial service: April 8 at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary Chapel, Elkhart, Ind.

Dutton, Darren, 21, Uniontown, Ohio, died March 22 in a motorcycle accident. Parents: Dan and Paula Dutton. Funeral: March 25 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Esch, Lewis Clayton, 98, Glendale, Ariz., died April 2. Spouse: Maggie Wideman Esch. Parents: Daniel and Elizabeth Guengerich Esch (deceased). Other survivors: children Clayton, Dwight, Eldora Eicher, Marilyn Ludwig; seven grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; five great-great grandchildren. Memorial service: April 5 at Glencroft Community Church, Glendale.

Frey, Alice, 61, Elmira, Ont., died Feb. 25. Parents: Menno and Lizzie Frey (deceased). Funeral: Feb. 28 at Floradale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Hilty, Gertrude, 99, Bluffton, Ohio, died March 31. Parents: Christian and Anna Gilliom Hilty (deceased). Funeral: April 4 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Kaufman, Everett Eugene, 76, Kingman, Kan., died March 23. Spouse: Eileen Schwartz Kaufman. Parents: Rudolph and Caroline Kaufman (deceased). Other survivors: children Karen Helm, Kathy Kuhns, Debbie Lechner; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 27 at Kingman.

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In 1997, when World Vision wanted to lend money to small businesses in Romania, it turned to MEDA for advice. The result was CAPA, a Romanian credit union which has made 500 loans worth $2.9 million to 344 businesses, providing employment for over 2,700 people.

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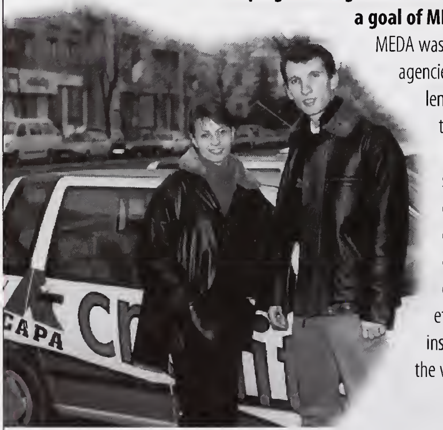

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How does God's call come?

When I began wading through graduate school information, I found that my heart kept drawing me to seminary, and to AMBS specifically.

In February 1999, I began classes at AMBS, not sure if I would stay for a semester, for a year, or for a degree. A week or two later, I was almost certain I would enter the Master of Divinity program. All I can say is that I was swept in by three facets of life at AMBS: worship, study and community.

I am unsure about what I'm going to *do* when I'm finished here. However, I am living each day secure that *here* is a good place to *be* as I wrestle with the question marks that punctuate God's call on my life.

Jackie Wyse
Pastoral ministry student at AMBS
from Archbold, Ohio

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

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Klassen, Jerry, S6, Hillsboro, Kan., died March 20 of complications from a car accident. Spouse: Violet Funk Klassen. Parents: Sam and Hulda Klassen (deceased). Other survivors: children Anita Unruh, Amy Ratzlaff; four grandchildren. Funeral: March 23 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Kratz, Amanda Mininger, 85, Souderton, Pa., died April 4 of aortic stenosis. Spouse: Wayne Kratz. Parents: John and Martha Nice Landis Mininger (deceased). Other survivors: children Wayne, Laverne, Jane Haines; seven grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 8 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Martin, Elsie, 74, Kinzers, Pa., died March 19. Parents: Joseph and Mary Benner Martin (deceased). Funeral: March 24 at Hershey Mennonite Church, Kinzers.

Miller, Mary Emma, 82, Hartville, Ohio, died March 6. Spouse: Atlee Miller. Other survivors: children Lois Jones, James; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: March 10 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Regier, Ferdinand, 89, Henderson, Neb., died April 2. Spouse: Tena Regier. Parents: Abraham and Susanna Regier (deceased). Other survivors: children Wendell, Richard, Eugene, Janice Anderson; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 5 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Schrock, Rufus, 89, Phoenix, died March 26. Spouse: Edna Troyer Schrock. Parents: Jonas and Susie Kauffman Schrock (deceased). Other survivors: children Irene Beckler, Susie Graber, Glen, Orvan, Larry; 13 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: March 30 at Sunnyslope Mennonite Church, Phoenix.

Sundheimer, Don Ray, 60, Fresno, Ohio, died March 28 from a tree-trimming accident. Spouse: Janice Lewis Sundheimer. Parents: Fred and Mary Schindler Sundheimer (deceased). Other survivors: children Melissa, Tiffany, Dirk. Funeral: March 31 at Sugarcreek, Ohio.

classifieds

- **Virginia Conference's** Northern District is seeking a ***bivocational pastor*** with church planting skills and interests to lead the Crest Hill congregation at Wardensville, W.Va. Contact Michael Shenk, Overseer, 540-434-0578.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Berne, Ind., seeks a ***director of Christian education***. The position will be full-time. Send resume by May 15, 2000. To inquire further for job description, contact First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-3108; email craig@firstmennonite.org

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a multiracial, inner-city elementary school, has teaching positions available. We are in search of a full-time ***5th/6th-grade teacher***, and part-time teachers for ***art, music, library and computers*** (can combine for full-time). Ten-month contracts begin Aug. 14, 2000.

  For more information contact Marv Friesen, Principal, CMLC, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** seeks ***human resources director***, beginning June 2000. Responsibilities include development/implementation of HR policies and practice. Qualifications: administration, team player and relational skills. HR experience preferred.

  Contact Lamar Myers, P.O. Box 458, Salunga, PA 17538-0458; 717-898-251; email LamarM@emm.org

classifieds

- **Central Christian School** is seeking qualified people to fill the following positions: ***Elementary school director/teacher*** (immediately); ***business manager*** (experience preferred; August 2000); ***director of admissions/capital campaign staff*** (August 2000); ***guidance counselor*** (August 2000); ***director of instrumental music*** (experience preferred; August 2000); ***math*** (high school teaching position; August 2000); ***teachers grades K-6*** (August 2000).

  Contact Frederic Miller, Principal, Central Christian School, P.O. Box 9, Kidron, OH 44636; 330-857-7311; email ccs_fmiller@tccsa.net

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- **River East MB Church** is seeking additional members for its ***pastoral team***. Women and men with gifts in the areas of pastoral care, discipling, preaching, coordination and outreach are invited to apply.

  Please direct inquires or CVs to Pastoral Search Committee, River East MB Church, 755 McLeod Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2K 0B8. Inquiries can also be made by calling the church at 204-663-5096; email schubert@pangea.ca

- **Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church**, Abbotsford, B.C., is currently looking for a ***bilingual pastor (German/English)***. This is a full-time position available immediately, in an urban community, with an average of 200-300 attending each service. The pastor will coordinate and direct all German ministries, duties and special events and oversee the joint unity for both our German and English congregations and church administration.

  Please direct applications (with resume and references) to Search Committee, Eben-Ezer Mennonite Church, 2051 Windsor St., Abbotsford, BC V2T 6L9; fax 604-850-8455; email eemc@rapidnet.net

- **Hesston College** seeks ***admissions counselor***. Qualifications: good communication and organizational skills, commitment to Mennonite higher education, familiarity with the Mennonite Church. Responsibilities: develop and implement recruitment plan for assigned territory, build relationships with top prospects and applicants, telemarket, travel, represent Hesston College at churches and high schools. Bachelor's degree preferred. Position available early summer.

  Send resume and references to Clark Roth, Director of Admissions, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. For more information email clarkr@hesston.edu or phone 800-995-2757.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 accredited school accountable to local Mennonite churches, seeks people committed to Jesus Christ to fill positions that will equip students for a life of discipleship. The following positions are available in August 2000: ***Business administrator*** to plan and oversee programs and activities in finance, technology and facility improvement, and to participate in public relations and development endeavors. ***Math/science teacher(s)*** for middle school and high school courses. ***5th grade teacher*** for self-contained classroom. ***Part-time Spanish teacher*** for high school courses.

  Please contact Glenna J. Hershberger, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; 610-286-0353; email pp002979@mindspring.com

- **Needed: *Executive director*** for a new alliance of 5 church-related retirement communities in southeast Pa. B.A./B.S. (master's preferred), 5+yrs. executive leadership in healthcare or related field. Must take initiative and work collaboratively with 5 other CEOs. Ability to bring together diverse resources and systems and think "outside the box." Administrative and financial skills important. Knowledge of Anabaptist theology and good moral character.

  Send resume to Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; email timstair@compuserve.com by May 30, 2000.

- **Bluffton College** invites applications for a one-year position in ***history*** beginning fall 2000, with possibility of conversion to tenure-track position. Ph.D. required (ABD considered). Must have background in ancient or medieval history. Ability to teach European intellectual history, a non-Western area, and/or philosophy a plus. Teaching load is divided between a general education humanities course and courses in other areas. Candidates should have strong commitment to teaching excellence and serious scholarship. Expected appointment at the assistant level, although other applications considered. Additional information is available at www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/employment.htm. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Joetta Schlabach, Special Assistant to the Dean, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. Call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

Conscientious objection to military taxation

by Susan Miller Balzer

Our tax money kills the enemies Christ asks us to love. Until we stop our complicity in the destruction of war, we cancel out our contributions for peace with our payment for war.

God is calling us to practice conscientious objection to military taxation. We can begin by giving wholehearted support to the legislative efforts of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund (NCPTF). The Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund (RFPTF) Bill would allow our tax dollars to do "alternative service" like Civilian Public Service (CPS) provided for our drafted men. While the bill might not limit the money Congress authorizes for war, conscientious objectors (COs) could at least know their tax payments would not pay for killing.

Perhaps COs who cannot pay for war have not suffered visibly enough to affect the Mennonite church the way that the suffering of drafted COs prior to World War II did. We may need more COs like the apostle Peter and our early Anabaptist leaders, who willingly suffered rather than disobey their conscience.

The RFPTF bill is based on the same premise as CPS and the alternative service provisions that followed it: COs have a legal obligation and a willingness to serve their country, but they cannot violate their conscience by doing military service.

Some COs, however, believe that any cooperation with the government's coercive efforts to collect taxes to fund the military is wrong. These war tax resisters' actions parallel those of COs who resisted the wartime draft and all military orders and those who refuse to register for the "peacetime" draft.

Mennonite conferences have passed resolutions to support the peace tax campaign and to accommodate war-tax resisters by not withholding federal income taxes from their paychecks. But for most of us, our actions have not caught up with our words.

I first became a war tax resister when I connected paying the federal telephone tax with paying for the Vietnam War. Unlike my male peers, I didn't need to fear being physically drafted to fight. However, by voluntarily paying taxes designated for war, I risked complicity with the military.

When I ask people if their conscientious objection extends to paying for war, I hear a variety of answers, all based on fear: "I can't control what the government does with my tax money. If I resist, the government will just come and get my money anyway. It will get even more, if I have to pay penalties and interest. Besides, it's illegal to not pay my share of taxes. And I don't want to go to jail."

Others say, "What difference can I make? It's too much of a hassle. I don't want to face an audit. I [or my institution or business] may suffer if donors or customers see us as radicals." And the clincher: "We don't want to do something controversial that might affect our work for peace."

Karen Marysdaughter, former director of the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee (NWTRCC), asks, "Which do you fear most—what will happen to you if you refuse to pay war taxes, or the effect that paying for war has on people who are dying?"

NWTRCC publishes information helpful to anyone counting the costs of war tax resistance. And NWTRCC members encourage and support each other at biennial meetings. Our church, which values community and nonconformity to the world, can learn much from NWTRCC.

A unique opportunity to do just that happens this summer. For the first time, an international conference on war tax issues will be held in the United States. Mennonite participation with the people and issues at this conference could set the pace for our peace witness in the 21st century (see box below).

A concerted decision to practice conscientious objection to military taxation will greatly advance our mission to bring Christ's healing and hope to the world.

Susan Miller Balzer lives in Hesston, Kan.

Author's note: *To contact the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, see the Peace Tax Foundation address in the box below. To contact the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee and to learn of local war tax resistance groups, call 800-269-7464.*

A concerted decision to practice conscientious objection to military taxation will greatly advance our mission to bring Christ's healing and hope to the world.

What: VIII International Conference on War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns
When: July 6-9, 2000
Where: Campus of Catholic University of America, Washington
Who: Hosted by the National War Tax Resistance Coordinating Committee and the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund
Keynote speaker: Rev. James Lawson, leader in civil rights and nonviolence
Why: Peacemakers from 15 countries will meet to support one another and address issues related to conscientious objection to military taxation.
How: For registration information, contact the Peace Tax Foundation, 2121 Decatur Place, NW, Washington, DC 20008, 202-483-3751.

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J. Lorne Peachey

Taking Elián González to the bathroom

Children do not figure prominently in Jesus' ministry. In one of the few times they do get mentioned in the Bible, Jesus reaches out and touches them. He also gets angry with those who would prevent that from happening (Mark 10:14).

Suppose one of the children who came to Jesus had been Elián González, the 6-year-old Cuban who survived an escape to the United States that drowned his mother and 10 others when their boat swamped. No doubt Jesus would take that cold, lonely, frightened boy into his arms and comfort him. I also think he would have harsh words for the crowd of manipulators that has wormed its way into Elián's tragic story.

One of these is Fidel Castro, Cuba's premier, who has used this event to once again challenge and harass the United States. There are those in this country who want to prevent Elián from returning to his father because his parents were divorced or because Cuba is a communist island. There are the Cuban-Americans of Miami who see Elián's escape into the care of an expatriate great-uncle as a chance to advance their desire to overthrow Castro and return to their homeland. Or, most tragically, there are the politicians campaigning to be the next president of the United States, who are using Elián as a way to garner support or to criticize their opponents.

If this story challenges those of us who look on to reflect on the temptations we face to use others for our own interests, then Elián's rescue may not be a complete tragedy.

Newsweek calls all this "a weird cross between a cold-war showdown and a soap opera." However you label it, what we have is a child becoming the focus of adult agenda and ideologies. If Jesus had angry words for his disciples in the Gospel story, what might he say of the tragedy that has been unfolding in Florida?

I must admit, though, that I too have used others for my own purposes. One embarrassing example will suffice. When my children were young and the worship service got too long or the sermon too boring, I confess to leaning over to one or the other and asking, "Do you have to go to the bathroom?" Of course they did—always. If nature wasn't calling, Dad was.

Unlike my children, Elián has a lot more at stake in how he answers the questions put to him about whether he wants to go back to Cuba or stay in the United States. But the seeds of misuse and deception are in both situations. The mindset that allowed me to use my children to escape boredom can sprout into incidents such as those in which Elián is caught—using others to further one's own cause or ideology regardless of the effect on the one being used.

It happens too often among us. Concern for outsiders, for the needy, or even for our own children can become the cause around which individuals or groups amass power, authority and influence. These are all legitimate concerns, to be sure, and there's nothing inherently wrong with power and influence. But when we use these to further ourselves and our dreams at the expense of others, we have crossed a line that allows stories such as Elián's to happen.

I don't know why the disciples wanted to keep children from Jesus. Was it their need for orderliness, the desire to be in control or their pride in being able to determine who could or could not see their leader? The Bible doesn't say. But it does record that Jesus became angry with what they were doing. The manipulation, use and often abuse of another person for one's own cause, no matter how good or how right that cause may be, not only grieves but also angers our Master.

No one should have as much resting on his shoulders as Elián González does these days. As I write, it appears he may return to Cuba with his father. Whether that happens or he stays in the United States, the outrage is that Elián has lost his childhood as the result of the bizarre events that have developed since he was rescued from the Strait between Cuba and Florida last Thanksgiving Day. If his story challenges those of us who look on to reflect on the temptations we face constantly to use others for our own interests and welfare, then Elián's rescue may not be a complete tragedy.—*jlp*

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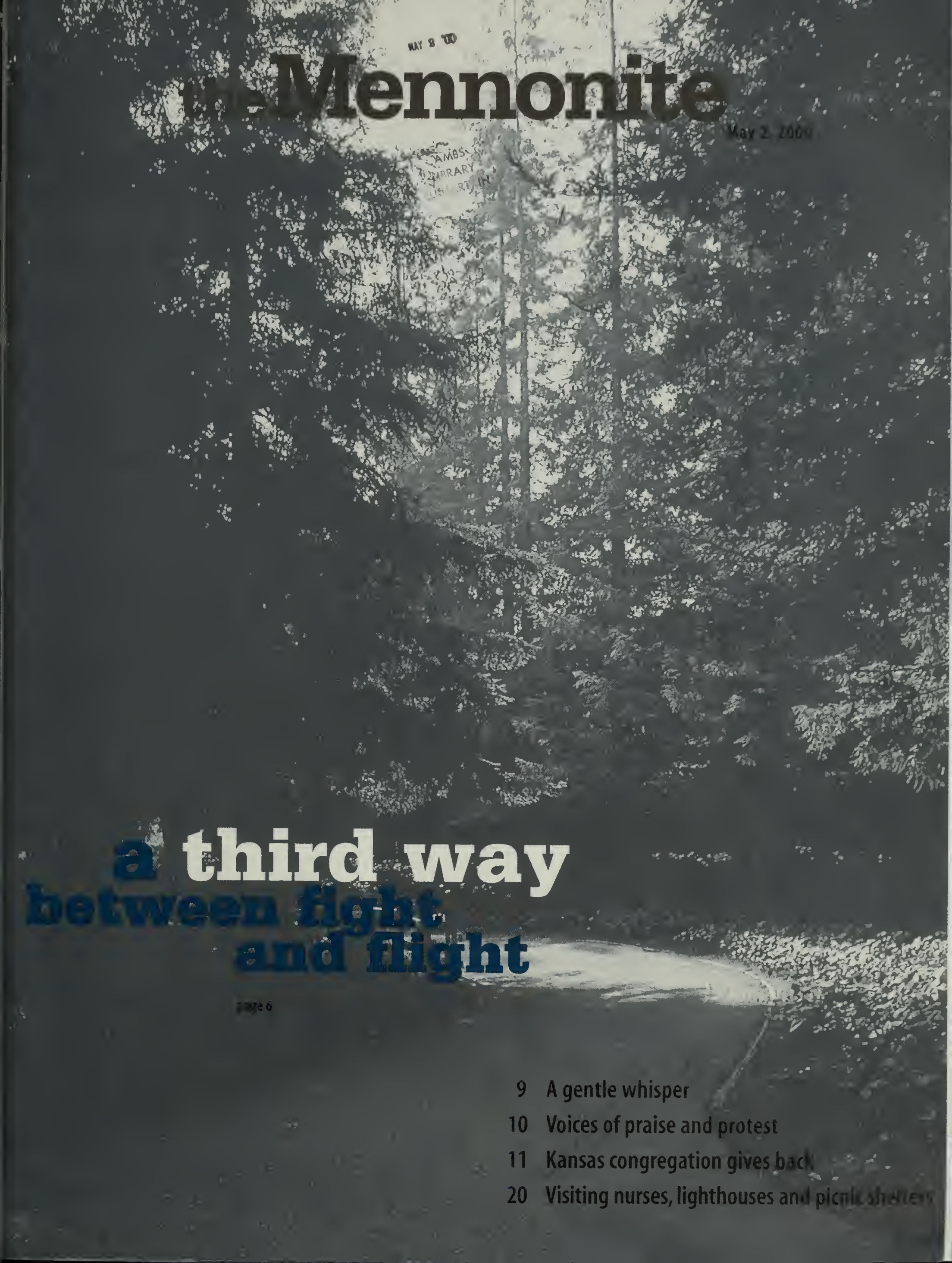

a third way between fight and flight

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20 Visiting nurses, lighthouses and picnic shelters

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Papal apology

The Roman Catholic Church will not soon ask for forgiveness for anything as the April 11 editorial ("When the Pope Confesses Our Sins") implies: "We all know … [the Pope] was confessing for the Roman Catholic Church." Rome sees the church as the body of Christ, which, with Christ as head, cannot sin. I too heard the Pope's confessions, but he spoke in the name of Catholic Christians who had sinned, never the church, which is infallible. We have a different understanding of the church as the body of Christ.

In 1965, when I attended Vatican II in Rome, I found that the late Pope John XXIII had the plea for forgiveness on the letterhead of the Secretariat for Christian Unity. So in one of my "Letters from Rome" to the Mennonite press in North America, I asked what we should do, stating that I thought we had a responsibility to respond when someone asks us for forgiveness. I was sad when no official response seemed possible, with some even suggesting that I had been brainwashed.

My disappointment continued when, in preparing for the Mennonite World Conference sessions in Amsterdam 1967, my friend Thomas Stransky, executive of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, asked whether he could attend. The MWC Executive Committee could not reach a positive agreement, saying that I could him invite him as my friend but not give him platform privileges. We have made some progress in recent Mennonite-Roman Catholic dialogue, but we have a long way to go.—*C.J. Dyck, Goshen, Ind.*

I have enjoyed *The Mennonite* over the past several years. I particularly look forward to J. Lorne's editorials. I detect a consistent effort to look beyond ourselves, to Jesus first, then to our history, our brothers and sisters in other cultures and, in the April 11 edition, to the Pope for setting an example for us. The editorial said, "The humility and sorrow he showed are attitudes we do well to emulate. … Too often in our zeal to be followers of Jesus we deny the gospel of love and service that he preached and lived." I agree.—*Urbane Byler, Slatington, Pa.*

Not paying the way

Dear Commissioner of Internal Revenue Service: We have withheld $10 of the income tax owed for 1999 as a witness to God's call to preserve human life and not to kill. The money that the U.S. government spends on military weapons and nuclear war preparations is a moral and spiritual transgression that we must protest in the clearest possible terms. For this reason we in conscience disobey the law that demands that we pay for that which is morally and spiritually wrong. As the world was told in the Nuremberg trials after World War II, every individual is responsible for their own actions.

What we all should have learned from the Holocaust is that when that which is immoral is the only thing which is legal, then that which is illegal has become the only thing that is moral.

War and weapons are not the way to solve human problems. Our children are mimicking the behavior of adults who kill to solve their problems, and the result is not nice, on our streets and in our schools. Yet our government would coerce us all to make war our method and weapons our instruments.

We invite you to join the movement of conscience which is turning the world toward nonviolence as its method of dealing with conflict. There is a lot of help available, and, if you are a Christian, especially from Jesus. We know that we live in a troubled and dangerous world. But we do not believe that adding trouble and danger, from handguns to nuclear arsenals, is the way to improve things.

We are donating the symbolic $10 to Christian Peacemaker Teams.—*John K. and Janet H. Stoner, Akron, Pa.*

Animal kingdom

John Zimmerman's article "The Peaceable Kingdom at Hand" (March 28) deserves our attention. In my 30 years as a vegetarian (now I eat as low on the scale of life as circumstances permit) I learned a lot. Briefly a few reflections not mentioned by Zimmerman:

- We all need protein, either animal or vegetable, in our diet. A pound of soybeans yields as much protein as a pound of beef. Beef cattle are poor converters, needing about six units of vegetable matter to produce one pound of beef. In other words, an area of land that could produce soybean protein to feed six people can only produce enough animal protein to feed one person. Insisting on animal protein deprives five people of their vegetable protein.
- Doctors today tell us that red meat is not all that healthy. So why not get our protein from white meat? Poultry converts at a ratio of 3 to 1; catfish converts on a 1 to 1 ratio.
- I was inspired by Albert Schweitzer and

theMennonite

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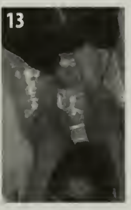

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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y readers say

his reverence for life. Back home on our farm, I used to butcher. I hated it. I was told that somebody had to do it and after a while I'd get used to it. During war, I discovered, men feel the same way about killing each other. They are told exactly the same thing: somebody has to do it, and they'll get used to it. Naturally I began to wonder why somebody had to do it and why we should get used to it.

• There is still the unsolved problem of cancer. There are obviously many causes. Could meat be one? When I was on the farm in Saskatchewan 65 years ago, it took about 15 weeks for a day-old chick to be served on our dinner table. Today we eat it seven weeks after hatching. Selective genetics is one reason; better feed is another. But what else did they feed that chicken to make it grow so fast? And why do one of every four people in North America, where we eat a lot of chicken, have cancer? Why here and not in the Far East or Africa? Any connection?—*Peter J. Dyck, Scottdale, Pa.*

As a hunter, I thought I had heard just about everything. Then Zimmerman's article and Laverne Rutschman's response (Readers Say, April 18). Now I discover that I and most of my friends and family may be responsible for war, street violence and abortion. In addition, it appears that we are not suitable for citizenship in God's kingdom.

Being a Mennonite for 50 years by choice rather than by birth, I'm always troubled by the hoops it is suggested I and my loved ones must jump through to be acceptable in the kingdom of grace.

These seem so out of place, especially in a magazine that has ridden in the forefront of the journey toward integration.—*Gil Reed, Nappanee, Ind.*

**Cover photo
by Oscar C. Williams**

Questionable motives

I found it ironic that Gordon Houser's editorial praised Illinois Gov. George Ryan for halting executions in the state ("No Quick Fix," March 28). This is the same man whose campaign coffers were allegedly enriched by the sale of commercial driver's licenses to unqualified drivers across the country. Ongoing investigations are revealing those drivers are responsible for the deaths of numerous innocent people.

George Ryan is the consummate politician, a backroom, good-old-boy wheeler-dealer whose motives have little to do with morals, ethics or any concern for the public good, let alone residents of death row.—*Debra Bender, Chicago*

A privileged place

Last summer I spent three weeks with the Lakota Native Americans on La Framboise Island near Pierre, S.D., as part of a Christian Peacemaker Team in support of the Native Americans' protest of a bill that would transfer nearly 100,000 acres of land to the state that the Lakota believe is theirs according to an 1868 treaty. I took the opportunity there to ask many questions about their spirituality.

One night, sitting around the campfire, I said to one of their religious leaders: "I assume you have homosexuals in your culture, as all cultures have. What is the attitude toward them?" He replied: "We give them a privileged place in the tribe. We believe that they have insights into both the female and male nature."

Many, no doubt, would think that such an attitude would cause their number of homosexuals to increase exponentially. But the Lakota have the same percentage of homosexuals as found in all populations of the world. —*Robert O. Epp, Henderson, Neb.*

Holy Spirit's guidance

I appreciated the letter from Abe Wiebe concerning the guidance of the Holy Spirit (Readers Say, March 21). The Bible is a reliable guide for faith and life only under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Under the guidance of the devil, it can become a tool of the devil. Examples: the Crusades, the Inquisition, slavery, intolerance for those different and hatred of Jews. The devil used Scripture to tempt Jesus.

Read the Bible, but ask the Holy Spirit to give understanding.—*Amos J. Kleinsasser, Bridgewater, S.D.*

Envisioning a New Mennonite Church

You are invited to an evening of fellowship and inspiration

as we seek our future together as God's transformed people in Mennonite Church USA. All are welcome.

A STUDY GUIDE FOR MENNONITE CONGREGATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Mennonite Church USA

- hear what congregations said in the congregational study, *Envisioning a New Mennonite Church*
- learn about plans for transformation
- fellowship across traditional MC/GC lines
- hear a sermon on "making all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

29 churchwide gatherings are planned throughout the United States, March-June 2000. Join the celebration for the church God is forming among us!

May 5-7, First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO. (RMMC annual sessions) Speaker–June Alliman Yoder
May 7, First Mennonite Church, Morton, IL. Speaker–Ervin Stutzman
May 7, Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH. Speaker–Jim Schrag
May 14, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, OH. Speaker–Loren Swartzendruber
May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA. Speaker–Diane Zaerr
May 21, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA. Speaker–Ervin Stutzman

For more information contact Shelley Buller 316-283-5100 ext. 249
or e-mail ShelleyB@gcmc.org

March 5, First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS.
March 12, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, PA.
March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA.
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson. NB.
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN.
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN.
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX.
March 26, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN.

April 2, Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA.
April 2, Norristown New Life Mennonite Church, Norristown, PA.
April 2, Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, PA.
April 2, Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, D.C.
April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA.
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN.
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL.
April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FL.
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK.
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA.

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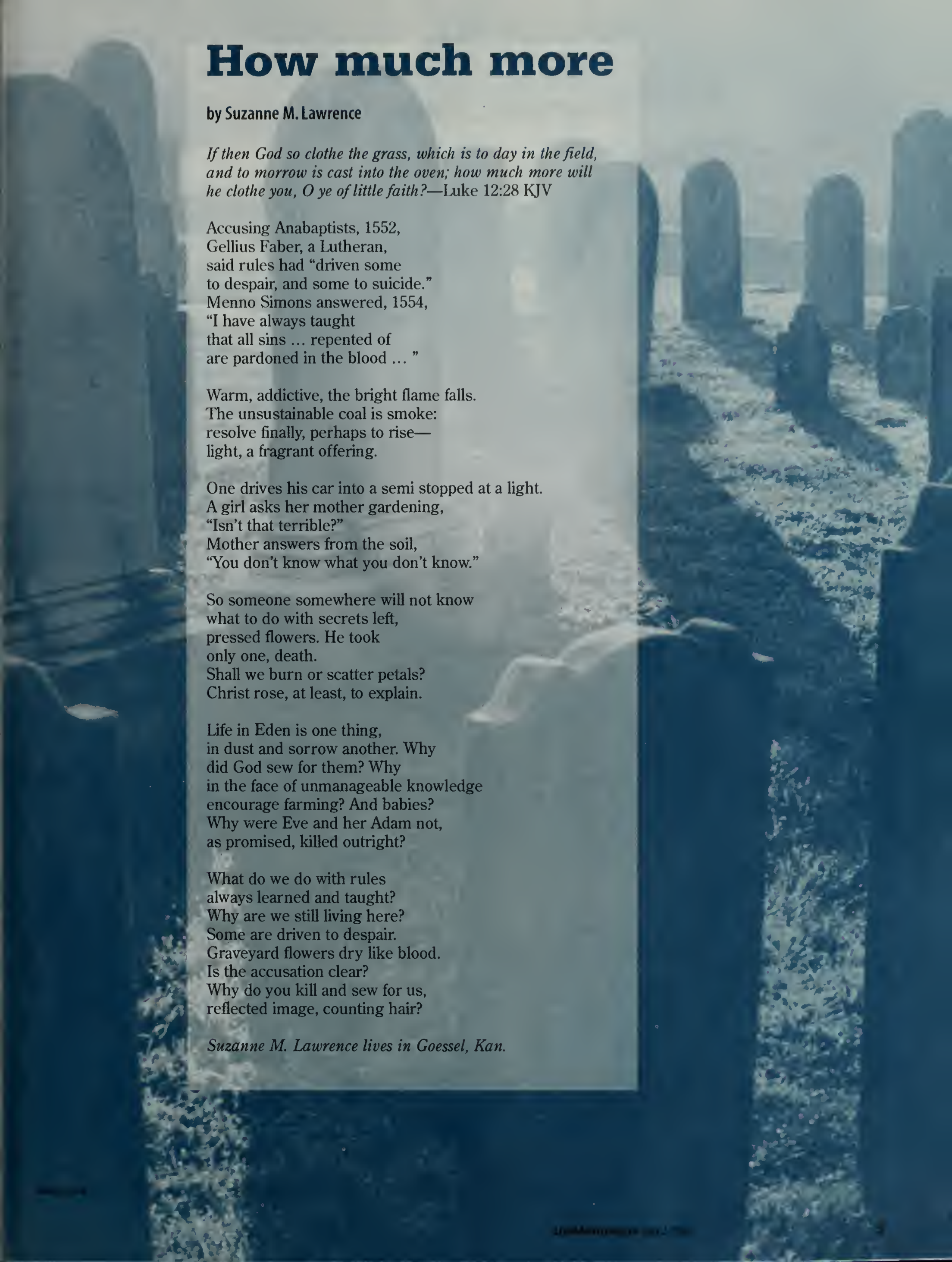
May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA.
May 21, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA.

June 4, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD.
June 8-11, Casselton Mennonite Church, Casselton, ND. (NCC annual sessions)
June 11, Community Mennonite Fellowship, Corning, NY.
June 22-23, Moses Lake High School, Moses Lake, WA. (PNMC annual sessions)
June 24, First Mennonite, Reedley, CA. (PSMC annual sessions)



How much more

by Suzanne M. Lawrence

*If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field,
and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will
he clothe you, O ye of little faith?*—Luke 12:28 KJV

Accusing Anabaptists, 1552,
Gellius Faber, a Lutheran,
said rules had "driven some
to despair, and some to suicide."
Menno Simons answered, 1554,
"I have always taught
that all sins … repented of
are pardoned in the blood … "

Warm, addictive, the bright flame falls.
The unsustainable coal is smoke:
resolve finally, perhaps to rise—
light, a fragrant offering.

One drives his car into a semi stopped at a light.
A girl asks her mother gardening,
"Isn't that terrible?"
Mother answers from the soil,
"You don't know what you don't know."

So someone somewhere will not know
what to do with secrets left,
pressed flowers. He took
only one, death.
Shall we burn or scatter petals?
Christ rose, at least, to explain.

Life in Eden is one thing,
in dust and sorrow another. Why
did God sew for them? Why
in the face of unmanageable knowledge
encourage farming? And babies?
Why were Eve and her Adam not,
as promised, killed outright?

What do we do with rules
always learned and taught?
Why are we still living here?
Some are driven to despair.
Graveyard flowers dry like blood.
Is the accusation clear?
Why do you kill and sew for us,
reflected image, counting hair?

Suzanne M. Lawrence lives in Goessel, Kan.

A third way between fight and flight

by Richard A. Kauffman

Mennonites have not done so well at disagreeing with each other, despite our peace position. Rather than fight nice, we tend to take flight instead. Welcome to First Church of the Splinter over (fill in the issue). The question I hear repeatedly in the church now is: Can we avoid a church split over homosexuality, church membership and who decides who is in and who is not in the new church?

We Mennonites like to think of ourselves as a people of the "third way" who try to hold together polarities that divide many other Christians. When we're at our best, we hold together evangelism and social concern, peace and justice, orthodoxy (sound teaching) and orthopraxy (faithful living). Can we, on this knotty issue, find a third way that avoids a contentious fight or an escapist flight?

If we can't avoid a church split, it will be like pulling up a blanket on a cold winter night to cover one's cold chin, only to expose one's feet to the chilly air—to borrow an image from John Updike. What have we gained if the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church integrate, only to splinter over homosexuality and church membership?

The homosexuality debate plays on two different Mennonite impulses, both of which are encoded in our spiritual beings, each with biblical roots. One is a concern for personal, moral righteousness, including sexual holiness. This is sometimes accompanied by a concern for the true church, a disciplined—and disciplining—church.

The other impulse is to be hospitable toward others, to care for the down-and-out, to advocate for the marginalized. This is often accompanied by a reticence to judge others.

These aren't uniquely Mennonite impulses. But we have held them in tension in a uniquely Mennonite way. I can't imagine any dedicated Mennonite seriously making a case for something other than integrity in matters of truth telling, promise keeping, fairness and honesty in business practices—and sexual fidelity. And I can't imagine any of us seriously advocating anything other than welcoming the stranger and providing justice for widows, aliens and the orphans. But in dealing with homosexuality, some of us are prone to let one impulse trump the other.

Good people, usually with the best of intentions, are on each side of the homosexuality debate. I have friends and family members on each side; I have even been surprised by the particular positions individuals take. Sometimes having a gay family member or close friend who is gay tilts a person toward the inclusive side. But not always. Often, if a person takes a conservative (or liberal) position on other issues, they will follow suit on homosexuality. But not necessarily.

The homosexuality debate plays on two different Mennonite impulses, both of which are encoded in our spiritual beings, each with biblical roots.

The other perspective: In relating to others with whom we disagree about homosexuality, it would be a good discipline for us all to recognize a part of ourselves—or at least a part of our spiritual heritage—expressed in the other perspective. Maybe it's like the experience siblings often have: They see one or the other of their parents in each other, sometimes even parental traits they don't particularly appreciate, yet it's part of their family heritage. Of course, many of us find ourselves in the middle: To shift the image slightly, we're like children of divorced or separated parents who don't want to have to choose between these two impulses.

The time-honored way Mennonites have rightly dealt with issues like this is to ask what the Bible says on the subject. But we're never going to reach an acceptable resolution with each other on this issue by simply debating the texts that deal explicitly with homosexuality. The Bible has more to say about sexuality in general and our human relationships with each other before God than what a few texts on homosexuality teach us. Besides, we each wear our own pair of lenses when we read those texts.

We need to go deeper into the biblical themes of who God is, what God requires of us, the nature of the church and how we understand grace. Here, too, there are at least two theological models or tendencies and polar opposites.

One tendency emphasizes the holiness of God. The church that tends to grow out of this is an exclusive one, and grace is seen as a life-transforming, recreative force.

The other tendency emphasizes the love of God. This can lead to an inclusive church, with grace seen as nonjudgmental forgiveness, pardon and acceptance.

There's a saying that God loves us so much God accepts us just the way we are, but God loves us so much God doesn't want us to stay the way we are. How to hold these two impulses in tension is the challenge. Jesus was probably the only person who could hold together radical inclusiveness with the radical demands of discipleship.

There's still another distinction. On one side are those who say we need to listen to the voices of our spiritual forebears—to the tradition of the church, its teaching and practice. It would be arrogant for us think we have all the answers in our modern, or postmodern, "enlightened" times.

On the other side are those who say the Lord has more light and truth to reveal from his Holy Word. The church has changed its mind on other issues, such as slavery or women as leaders in the church. Perhaps the Spirit is suggesting that new evidence about homosexuality should have its way with us.

Heeding wisdom from the past, being open to new light: We'd be fools not to do both. But how can we hold these two impulses together in creative tension? Is there a third way here, too?

Let me make four suggestions:

1. We need to commit ourselves to a discernment process and recognize that we are not engaging in a battle to win public opinion. Forming caucuses within or across area conference lines or engaging in petitions and ad campaigns will merely escalate the polarization.

Mennonites are learning about conciliation and mediation. Why can't we employ the best conciliation and problem-solving tools we have to deal with this issue? For starters, we should delineate what we agree on, then isolate real differences between us and the principles and issues behind them. Then we can look at the implications of our differences and what they mean for our life together.

We are dealing with boundary issues that are fundamentally identity issues. Who is in and who is not, by what criteria and who decides—these questions focus the larger question: What kind of people do we want to be? I'm convinced that if the homosexuality issue hadn't converged with the creation of the new Mennonite Church, something else would have come along to force this question upon us. Dare we look at the membership issue as a challenge, perhaps an opportunity even, rather than just a seemingly irresolvable dispute?

2. We need to be ready to make some tough, discriminating decisions—not easy for Mennonites, since we tend to think in black-and-white terms. This is as true of the open and welcoming side as of those wanting to hold the traditional line. Is either side open to considering shades of gray?

On the one side, there are some gay lifestyles that, morally speaking, are better than others. I have known people who have been in and out of numerous relationships, not always in a serial fashion. I have known others who have been in stable, committed relationships for decades. Is there not a moral distinction to be made here, a relative value judgment to be placed on these different lifestyles?

On the other side, there are people who think they are gay who might just be confused about their sexual identity. Or some may be at a point on the gay-straight continuum where they could—with communal support, appropriate counseling and spiritual discipline—live a "straight life." There are some gays who don't want to be gay or who don't find liberation in accepting their same-sex attraction. Can we

Jesus was probably the only person who could hold together radical inclusiveness with the radical demands of discipleship.

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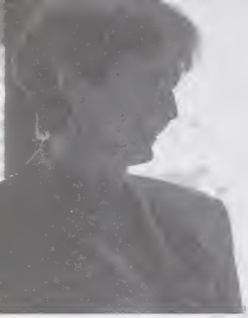


A third way

continued from page 7

stand with these people, too?

To all I ask: Can we agree that, even though we don't really understand what causes homosexuality, it is part of the woundedness of God's creation? And can we agree that all of us are called by God, on the basis of God's suffering with us on the cross, to bear the wounds of those so inflicted—to make them our wounds? Likewise, can we agree that God's intention for sexuality is for lifelong, covenantal, monogamous, heterosexual unions and that whatever pastoral accommodations we make for homosexuals in our midst are an exception to the standard, not an equally normative model?

> The people who make me most skeptical and guarded are those—on either side—who are so sure of themselves. And I've sensed that there's more than enough self-righteousness to go around.

3. We may need to live with some ambiguity. Not everything can be resolved one way or the other. How much unresolved tension can we live with?

Tony Campolo is a dynamic evangelical preacher, sociologist and political activist who has spoken at some of our churchwide Mennonite gatherings. On the issue of homosexuality, he makes no bones about where he stands: Homophobia is wrong, and gay bashing is a sin. But homosexual activity, he says, is also a sin, not befitting Christian disciples. What some people don't know is that Tony's wife, Peggy, belongs to an open and accepting mainline congregation where homosexuals in relationships may come just as they are and remain without ever changing. Tony and Peggy have vigorous disagreements and debates over this issue. But they've agreed to disagree, to keep talking and to stay married in the same house in spite of it.

Can the Campolos be a model for us as a denomination? I'm on Tony's side on this issue, but the question I put to myself and others like me is: Can we live with the Peggys in the Mennonite church if, indeed, that means also accommodating a few congregations who, as part of their mission, welcome some non-celibate homosexual members? If so, then maybe we can consider accepting the concept of "congregations of refuge," congregations that, under certain conditions, are freed by their area conferences to welcome practicing homosexuals. Is there a third way here, too?

4. We need to recognize that we are not just doing problem solving on a human plane. It is the mind and will of God we seek. This calls for prayer, listening to the Spirit, fasting and repentance. And in contexts where decisions must be made (congregations, area conferences, churchwide assemblies), alternative decision-making procedures should be explored.

For instance, apart from the issue of homosexuality, there is a movement in some circles in the broader church toward dispensing with parliamentary procedures and using a process of spiritual discernment that joins discussion, prayer, silence and listening to the Spirit—always focusing the question: God, is this your will? Rather than a parliamentarian overseeing the process, a "discernmentarian" helps keep the process on track. This proposed discernment process involves three interlocking venues where the will of the Spirit is prayerfully sought: the church, the home and one's own prayer closet. (For more on this process, see *Discerning God's Will Together: A Spiritual Practice for the Church* by Danny E. Morris and Charles M. Olsen, Upper Room Books, 1997.)

One thing I know for certain is that we can't be absolutely certain about these matters. The people who make me most skeptical and guarded are those—on either side—who are so sure of themselves. And I've sensed that there's more than enough self-righteousness to go around.

If we can't find a third way and a church split results, I don't know which group I'd want to join. I'm willing to be part of a church committed to wrestling with the issues, but I'm not willing to be part of a church defined by homosexuality, either for it or against it.

A measure of humility would help us all. We have made mistakes before, perhaps especially when we've been either immoderate or indiscriminate. For a long time we froze out people who were divorced, regardless of the situation or circumstances. Perhaps now we are reaping the whirlwind of an indiscriminate acceptance of divorce, not just as a way of dealing with bad marriages but the result of people putting the search for personal fulfillment ahead of maintaining covenantal relationships. Either course should give us pause as we find our way through the thicket of homosexuality and church membership.

Just as individuals need to confess their wrongdoing, so do we as a group. And to cry for mercy to the God who saves us all. I may have this all wrong, or some parts of it wrong. God forgive me—and correct me—if I do. And you, too, reader.

Richard A. Kauffman, Winfield, Ill., is a member of Lombard Mennonite Church.

A gentle whisper

God is always with us, but sometimes it takes a gentle prodding to remind us.

by John S. Broom

Mercy drops round us are falling, but for the showers we plead.—Traditional hymn

I had not been having a good day. Saturday night I was up late. Sunday morning I overslept and had to rush through breakfast to get to church on time. At church things went from bad to worse. By the time the worship service rolled around, I certainly did not have the proper attitude to worship our Creator.

All I wanted to do was go home and go to bed, but even that fell through because my wife had the car keys, and she was in the choir.

When I have days like this, I tend to notice the negatives more than the positives. And there were plenty of negatives to notice: No one shook my hand during the welcome period of the service; the special music singer decided to hit a special octave that only dogs can hear, which gave me a headache; someone behind me kept thumping their Bible in tune with the music.

I was about ready to bolt and run.

By this time, the pastor was ready to launch into his sermon, so I decided to tough it out. Just my luck, his topic was one that everyone but me needed to hear.

But then something happened that calmed my less-than-cheerful spirit. I started feeling slightly better. I was getting back on an even keel.

"God, what's going on here?" I prayed. Something was at work lifting my contrary spirit. I was actually starting to get into the sermon. Something in the words chased away my negative feelings.

I started paying attention, listening raptly to find out what could be causing this change of heart. Then it happened again. This time I noticed my spirit felt much better after the pastor had asked us to turn to a certain verse in the Bible.

That's strange. How could looking up a Bible verse make you feel better? I mused.

Fortunately, this was a day that the pastor had us jumping around in the Bible quite a bit.

The fourth time he asked us to look up a verse I sat waiting to see what would happen with my spirit. Sure enough, it was lifted even more. By this time I was almost soaring.

Then it hit me. It was not looking up the Bible verses that made me feel better; it was listening to everyone else looking them up.

The sound of all those Bible pages turning and rustling was not unlike that of a gentle rain shower, droplets of water pattering against leaves and blades of grass. Or perhaps that of a swift autumn breeze, with leaves scraping on the pavement after they are blown off the trees.

As I sat there, the words of an old, familiar hymn came back to me: "Mercy drops round us are falling, but for the showers we plead." God was giving me not only mercy drops but a veritable deluge of spirit-filling joy.

It reminds me of Elijah's encounter with God on Mount Horeb. He had just defeated the prophets of Baal, thanks to the power of God. He was riding the crest of victory, but his spirit plummeted into a black hole of despair. God told him to go to Mount Horeb and wait for God to pass by.

"Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper" (1 Kings 19:11b-12 NIV).

The sound of all those Bible pages turning and rustling was not unlike that of a gentle rain shower, droplets of water pattering against leaves and blades of grass.

Elijah found God in that gentle whisper. After all the blustering and violence of the previous events, the silence and comfort told him that God had arrived.

Now when I hear church members flipping pages to a certain Bible verse, I am reminded that God is there. And when I hear the soft pattering of a gentle rain shower, I am reminded that God is there.

God is always with us, but sometimes it takes a gentle prodding to remind us.

John S. Broom lives in Southaven, Miss.

Voices raised in praise, protest in capital

Mennonites sing for peace, join IMF demonstrations

WASHINGTON—Mennonites gathered in the nation's capital April 15-16 for two events, each different in its strategies but similar in its goals. Both were intended by organizers as nonviolent calls for justice and peacemaking. But one relied on a capella four-part singing, the other on bullhorns, placards and human chains.

On April 15, nearly 100 people met in front of the Lincoln Memorial for a Hymnsing for Peace, organized by First Mennonite Church of Richmond, Va. Within proximity of the halls of power of U.S. decision-makers, the singers raised their voices for more than an hour as a witness to ways other than violence to address conflict.

This was the second consecutive year for the hymnsing. Among those in attendance was a White House staff member who shared a welcome from President Clinton.

As the last strains of "Praise God From Whom" drifted across the Mall, a few blocks away students from George Washington University were chanting, "Whose streets? Our streets!" in preparation for the next day's demonstrations against the policies of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), which were holding their spring meetings in Washington.

Many hymnsing participants joined a diverse crowd of thousands of activists for the April 16 demonstrations. Goshen (Ind.) College student Wade Ebersole called the protest a spiritual experience.

"The solidarity between all those people was absolutely beautiful," he said. "Everyone stood together."

In addition to Goshen, students also came from Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va. Some participants were motivated by exposure to poverty overseas. As conditions for IMF loans, countries are often required to increase exports and devalue their currency to attract foreign investments and trade.

"Farmers who used to grow their own food are now growing coffee and exporting it," says Goshen's Jeremy Shenk, who spent a term in Costa Rica. "And the money is so devalued they can't afford to buy the food they used to grow."—*Ryan Beiler*

Above: Dave Hockman-Wert of Huntingdon, Pa., and Sally Kalofra of Silver Spring, Md., join nearly 100 other people for an April 15 Hymnsing for Peace in front of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. Below: Goshen (Ind.) College students Wade Ebersole, Jeremy Shenk and Steven Rhodes link with a human chain to block access to World Bank and International Monetary fund meetings on April 16 in Washington.

Ryan Beiler (2)

Students proclaim Jubilee at rally

A week before demonstrators took to Washington streets to protest World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies, another group gathered in the nation's capital to call for economic justice.

More than 6,000 people joined an April 6 rally for Jubilee 2000, the international initiative calling for cancellation of crushing debts on impoverished nations. Among the participants were students from Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Bluffton (Ohio) College; Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.; and Hesston (Kan.) College.

"I believe Jesus calls on us to proclaim Jubilee and to help the poor," Hesston student Jason Schmidt told the *Washington Post*.

The rally included speakers such as AFL-CIO president John Sweeney, Roman Catholic bishop Oscar Rodriguez of Honduras and Clinton economic adviser Gene Sperling.

The rally kicked off a week of events concluding with the World Bank-IMF demonstrations on April 16. —*Rich Preheim*

To celebrate anniversary, Kansas congregation reaches across cultural differences to repay favor

INMAN, Kan.—Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church exists in part because of the help of other Mennonites. So when the congregation began planning its 125th anniversary celebration last year, members decided to repay the favor.

The church was started by Russian immigrants who arrived in south central Kansas in 1874, settling near what is now Inman. By the end of the first winter, many in the group were nearly destitute. So they appealed to Mennonites in Pennsylvania for a $10,000 loan.

"This helped the 86 households in the congregation to keep going," says Hoffnungsau pastor Dean Linsenmeyer. "So we felt that in our 125th year it was time for us to do something for someone else."

For ideas, the congregation went to Mennonite Men, the General Conference Mennonite Church men's organization. It sponsors the Tenth Man program, which gives financial assistance mainly to new congregations seeking to buy or build their own meetinghouses.

Mennonite Men connected Hoffnungsau with Christ Community Mennonite Church in Schaumburg, Ill., 10 miles west of Chicago's O'Hare Airport. The 11-year-old congregation was started by current leaders LeRoy and Pauline Kennel in the racially, economically and culturally diverse "village" of 75,000. The congregation includes nearly 100 people, about half of whom are active. The majority are first-generation Mennonite and come from a variety of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds.

In 1993, the congregation bought a two-acre property that included a house and a barn. The house provides living space for the Kennels, along with a church office, a counseling center and a small Ten Thousand Villages outlet. A couple of years ago, Christ Community began exploring renovating the barn to serve as its meetinghouse. (The congregation now meets in a local community center in Schaumburg.) The estimated cost would be the same as or less than building a new structure.

A small group of Hoffnungsau members visited Schaumburg last fall and brought back an enthusiastic report. The congregation decided to underwrite the $50,000 commitment Mennonite Men had made to Christ Community.

"It was surprising to me how people really caught hold of this," Linsenmeyer says. "We never really made it into a high-pressure thing."

Hoffnungsau, with about 140 active members and participants, gave itself six months to raise the money. As the congregation celebrated its 125th anniversary, beginning in July 1999, they also held fund-raisers for the project.

"We only held one offering specifically for this project," Linsenmeyer says. "Two weeks before the Feb. 20 [2000] deadline, we were still $10,000 short. During the worship service, the little kids passed out envelopes with small amounts of money in them to see what would grow.

"Two weeks later, the kids picked up the envelopes—and there was a little over $10,000 raised."

At a Feb. 20 "Service of Rededication," Hoffnungsau members Bob and Teresa Poulseen, who have been especially active in the project, presented LeRoy Kennel with a large facsimile of a check for $50,000. On April 16, Barney Habegger of Berne, Ind., Mennonite Men vice president, traveled to Schaumburg to give the the real check.

"This was a terribly important gift to us," Pauline Kennel says. "It was a boost to our building fund and also to our morale."

The two congregations have made several "people connections." The youth groups met at St. Louis 99 and participated together in a service project. Two Hoffnungsau members with long experience in building, particularly churches, have visited to look at the barn.

Hoffnungsau members are planning to travel to Schaumburg to volunteer when construction begins. Linsenmeyer will spend a week of his sabbatical there this summer. The two congregations are even dreaming of someday meeting halfway to hold a retreat together.

The project has proven to be mutually beneficial. "It has been good for people from our church to get to know a stately, established Mennonite church," LeRoy Kennel says.

At Hoffnungsau, Linsenmeyer says, "Our giving level has gone up—not just for this project but for local and other needs as well. It's as if we've said to ourselves, 'We're going somewhere; we're doing something.' Enthusiasm and energy have really been up."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

We felt that in our 125th year it was time for us to do something for someone else.

—Dean Linsenmeyer

GCMC News Service

With the financial support of Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church of Inman, Kan., Christ Community Mennonite Church in Schaumburg, Ill., plans to renovate this barn for its meeting place. The house at the left is already the home for pastors LeRoy and Pauline Kennel, a counseling center and a small Ten Thousand Villages store.

Mission workers energize Tokyo churches

Young COM-MBM appointees have unique advantages

TOKYO—In a culture that respects the wisdom and experience of elders, Tokyo-area Mennonites have discovered a surprising resource: young mission workers. As the congregations struggle to draw new members, especially youth and young adults, they are looking to Kazuhiro and Lois Enomoto and Gerald and Rie Neufeld for new energy and vision.

Lois is from the United States, and Gerald is Canadian. But their spouses are Japanese. That, coupled with their ages, provides the two families some advantages.

"The church as a whole is saying that [the Neufelds and Enomotos] are unique," says Masao Miyazaki, pastor of Misato Mennonite Church, a member of the six-congregation Tokyo-Area Fellowship of Mennonite Churches. "They say things that need to be said straightforwardly because they are part of the culture; they know the language, and they are young. The church considers them a very valuable resource."

Gerald Neufeld and the Enomotos are joint appointees of the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. Gerald works in Tokyo congregations preaching, leading English Bible studies and teaching Sunday school. But what people know best about him is his love of music. Gerald leads music in a variety of settings, including a youth gospel choir.

Rie Neufeld participates in Gerald's ministry through assisting with sermon preparation and music activities. The Neufelds led a children's camp and a Christmas Eve service last year.

The Enomotos and their 2-year-old daughter, Erika, live at the Tokyo Anabaptist Center. Kazuhiro, or Kaz for short, directs TAC, an open-ended role that includes maintaining the library, attending meetings and building relationships with Mennonite congregations in Tokyo through preaching, attending prayer meetings and leading Bible studies.

"The Bible studies and prayer meetings are really good opportunities to get to know church members, hear their stories, and learn what the church is thinking," Kaz says.

Lois Enomoto runs the guesthouse at TAC. She also hosts a coffee break for mothers in the neighborhood and teaches an English-language Bible class. Once a week, she hosts an English forum at TAC, a time to converse in English about current issues and events.

Lois and Kazuhiro Enomoto and their daughter, Erika

Rie Neufeld

Gerald Neufeld

The Enomotos say the biggest challenge for the Tokyo congregations is evangelism and church growth. A second challenge is building relationships with each other.

While membership in the Tokyo congregations has not increased for many years, Kaz says they still have great strength. "The churches are small, but they have perseverance and keep surviving," he says. "People could choose to go to a bigger church next door, but they are committed to stay."

Kaz hopes the church will become more mission-oriented, reaching out across Asia. Even within Tokyo, he said, there are Chinese and Korean groups with whom relationships could be built. Lois envisions a coffee room where people can stop by or a shop that sells Ten Thousand Villages items.

Miyazaki welcomes the efforts. "The Japanese church is so small, so we are preoccupied with our own responsibilities," he says. "We are barely involved with other local churches. Missionaries can expand the way we think, so that we care not only about ourselves but also for others."—*Bethany Swope for GCMC and MBM News Service*

Integration work is good business

It all started with a meeting to explore the creation of an integrated area conference among congregations of the Central District, Northern District and Iowa-Nebraska conferences.

Central District representative Kathy Schooley of Bloomfield, Iowa, and Northern District representative Sharon Waltner of Parker, S.D., had never met before but got acquainted over lunch. They discovered that both families work in the cattle business. The Waltners feed cattle while Schooley's husband is part of an extended family who owns and operates a livestock auction barn.

At the next meeting, the two women exchanged phone numbers and addresses. Shortly afterward, Waltner's husband called the Schooleys about purchasing a truckload of heifers.

Since then, although the husbands still haven't met, several loads of cattle and more than $80,000 have changed hands on the strength of phone calls and a mutual trust built through a common church bond.
—Transformation News

David E. Orman

CPT

Feet first and headlong into Easter preparations

The Lenten season found Mennonites preparing in a variety of ways for Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Left: To begin Holy Week, Tera Brackman washes the feet of Camila Crawford at an April 16 foot washing service at Seattle Mennonite Church. Right: Lynn Stoltzfus, a member of Christian Peacemaker Teams' Mexico delegation (center), and an internal refugee from Chiapas discuss plans for a Lenten service with Major Gregorio Mejia of the Mexican army. During Lent, CPT members in Mexico joined a community of 1,100 displaced people near an army base in southern Mexico. The refugees were forced from their homes two years ago by paramilitary violence.

Homosexuality prompts withdrawals in Alberta

As the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta considers homosexuality and church membership, two congregations have withdrawn over what they perceive as tolerance of sin. A third congregation has said it will withhold conference funding.

Conference member Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church accepts noncelibate homosexuals as members and is part of the Supportive Congregations Network. Conference leaders are waiting the results of a mail-in vote calling for a three-year period of study and discernment before taking further action.

That has prompted Coaldale (Alta.) Mennonite Church and Calgary's Pineridge Christian Fellowship to withdraw their memberships in the Alberta conference and, by default, in Mennonite Church Canada.

"We believe that the present structure and political will of the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta is not consistent with our understanding of Scripture and the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective," Coaldale says in its resolution.

Several other congregations are also considering withdrawing their membership. Meanwhile, Tofield (Alta.) Mennonite Church said it will withhold conference funding for one year pending resolution to the issues of homosexuality and discipline.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Three Herald Press books win honors

Three books published by Herald Press have received Angel Awards from Religion in Media.

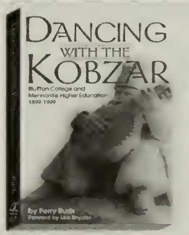
Winning awards were *The Amish in Their Own Words: Amish Writings from 25 years of* Family Life *Magazine,* compiled by Brad Igou; *A Cry from the Clay* by Esther Bender about her life with Parkinson's disease; and *Rachel, A Hutterite Girl,* a children's storybook by Rachel Maendel and illustrated by Hannah Marsden.

The Angel Awards are given "to combat the impression spread by some of the media that everyone is on drugs or alcohol and is adulterous or promiscuous."

Two Bluffton graduates to be honored by alumni group

BLUFFTON, Ohio—Bluffton College graduates Claude and Mary (Maust) Boyer will receive the Alumni Distinguished Service Award from the school's alumni association at a May 6 luncheon.

The Boyers, now retired and living in Pandora, Ohio, graduated from Bluffton in 1950. Claude, a native of Quakertown, Pa., went to Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Chicago, receiving his degree in 1953. He has since pastored congregations in Pennsylvania, Ohio and California. He is now a newsletter editor for Central District Conference. Mary, originally from Sugarcreek, Ohio, was a piano teacher for 20 years.



Pandora Press U.S. Book News

Dancing with the Kobzar

Bluffton College and Mennonite Higher Education, 1899-1999; SAMH vol. 38

by Perry Bush

J. Nelson Kraybill: "Don't know what a Kobzar is? You'll dance with one by the time you finish this colorful narrative."

Theron Schlabach: "Bush offers a moving tale...."

Susan Fisher Miller: "This joyous, deftly-written history of Bluffton College flows along like the campus's Little Riley Creek."

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by the way ...

U.S. President Rutherford B. Hayes is celebrated as a hero in Paraguay for arbitrating a dispute with Argentina that gave Paraguay ownership of the Chaco, which is well-known for its Mennonite settlements.—*Wall Street Journal*

After visa denial, worker returns to Nepal

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite mission worker Miriam Krantz can once again work in Nepal, where she had served from 1963 until earlier this year. The government in January had refused to renew her visa, forcing Krantz to relocate to India.

But after a week in India, Krantz was invited back to Nepal by UNICEF, which arranged for a new visa. Krantz received the visa on March 21 and has since returned to Nepal, where she plans to stay until January 2001.

Krantz is serving with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions.

Peacebuilder to speak at Bluffton graduation

BLUFFTON, Ohio—International peacebuilder and professor John Paul Lederach will give the commencement address at Bluffton College on May 7. He will also receive an honorary doctorate of human letters.

A professor of conflict studies and sociology at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., Lederach's international conflict experience includes Nicaragua, Northern Ireland, Somalia and Spain. He is the author of nine publications on peace, reconciliation and conflict transformation.

New GC director of communications named

NEWTON, Kan.—Cynthia G. Snider of Wichita has been named director of communications for the General Conference Mennonite Church. She will begin May 8, succeeding Dave Linscheid, who left to become director of alumni relations for Bethel College in North Newton.

Snider is currently director of marketing and public relations for a Wichita nonprofit child advocacy organization. She has also worked in advertising and in magazine and newspaper journalism. She has a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Georgia with an emphasis in advertising and public relations. She has also done graduate work in anthropology at Wichita State University.—*GCMC News Service*

Goodville Mutual reports strong financial year

NEW HOLLAND, Pa.—Goodville Mutual Casualty Co.'s equity grew 15.3 percent in 1999, and premium volume increased 6.4 percent, due to new business and not rate hikes, president Herman Bontrager recently reported at the company's annual meeting.

Goodville Mutual provides personal, light commerical, farm and church insurance packages in partnership with independent agents in Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Maryland, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania and Virginia. The company has $26 million in premium writings and more than $46 million in assets.

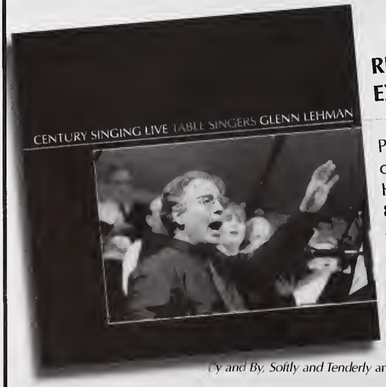
Also in 1999, Goodville Mutual made $46,000 in charitable contributions, including to building projects at Bluffton (Ohio) College; Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.; and Goshen (Ind.) College. The company also contributed to Mennonite Central Committee's planned headquarters construction project, Mennonite Disaster Service's 50th anniversary exhibit and Mennonite World Conference's Global History Project.

Longtime Africa missionary dies in car accident

NEWTON, Kan.—Leona Entz of rural Newton, who served in Congo/Zaire for 27 years, died April 9 as the result of injuries received in a car accident. She was 82. Entz and her husband, Samuel, who died last year, served with Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission and the Commission on Overseas Mission from 1949 to 1976.—*AIMM and GCMC news services*

Hesston College to graduate 129 students

HESSTON, Kan.—Hesston College will award associate of arts degrees to 129 students at its 90th commencement ceremony on May 7. The speaker will be Mennonite Board of Missions president Stanley Green. Other activities will include the nursing pinning ceremony and commissioning of pastoral ministries graduates.



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Events

Mennonite Senior Sports Classic, June 28-July 1, Goshen (Ind.) College. Sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite Association of Retired Persons, Goshen College. Contact: stewardship@mma-online.org or 800-348-7468, ext. 269.

Workers

Bergen, Wes, was licensed April 2 as pastor of New Creation Fellowship, Newton, Kan.

Miller, Corey, was ordained April 16 as pastor of Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Births

Bailey, Kyle Thomas, April 6, to Holly (Friesen) and Shawn Bailey, Henderson, Neb.

Gehman, Nathan Wyse, April 2, to Wayne Gehman and Carmen Wyse, Harrisonburg, Va.

Hauck, Taylor Corrine, April 2, to Brad and Michelle (Nissley) Hauck, Mount Joy, Pa.

Mestl, Benjamin James, April 10, to Gina (Erb) and James Mestl, Henderson, Neb.

Rohrer, Brittany Leigh, April 1, to Anita (Zehr) and Jordan Rohrer, Harrisonburg, Va.

Schloneger, Anna Lorena, March 7, to Kent and Lorene (Rothenbuhler) Schloneger, Dalton, Ohio.

Short, Simon Lynn, March 26, to Carl and Jodi (Zuver) Short, Archbold, Ohio.

Strong, Evan Samuel, March 22, to Carolyn (Herr) and Jeff Strong, Harrisonburg, Va.

Whiteman, Alyson Grace, Feb. 29, to Michael and Nicole (Wert) Whiteman, State College, Pa.

Correction: Madison Kylie Mathew, March 24, to Johncey and Kristin (Schrock) Mathew, Lancaster, Pa. This announcement was incorrect in the April 18 issue.

Marriages

Bergen/Boehr: Keith Bergen, Henderson, Neb., and Gretchen Boehr, Henderson, April 15 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Berkshire/Chupp: Allison Berkshire, Harrisonburg, Va., and Benjamin Chupp, April 8 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Fisher/Hochstetler: Kent Fisher, Dayton, Ohio, and Lois Hochstetler, Goshen, Ind., March 18 at Columbus, Ohio.

Deaths

French, Paul, 81, Davidsville, Pa., died April 12. Spouse: Evelyn Knavel Shetler French. Parents: William and Ruth Kaufman French (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Daryl, William, Thomas; stepchildren: Sherrill Koontz, Myles Shetler, Arden Shetler; five grandchildren; 12 stepgrandchildren; five great-grandchildren; four step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 15 at Mattawana Mennonite Church, Lewistown, Pa.

Herr, Elizabeth Hostetler, 99, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 17. Spouse: Amos Christian Herr (deceased). Parents: Jeptha and Fannie Hostetler (deceased). Survivors: children June Hofstetter, Ed; six grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Feb. 19 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hooley, Roy, 92, Shipshewana, Ind., died April 8. Spouse: Delsie Hostetler Hooley. Parents: Milo and Clara Blough Hooley (deceased). Other survivors: children Maurice, Francis, Dennis; nine grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 12 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Hunsberger, Matilda Weber, 82, Waterloo, Ont., died April 1. Spouse: Gordon Hunsberger (deceased). Parents: Allan and Sarah Martin Weber (deceased). Survivors: children Margaret, Robert, Brian; four grandchildren. Memorial service: April 7 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Kauffman, Jess, 89, Sarasota, Fla., died April 4 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Viola Winn Kauffman. Parents: Joseph and Agnes Kauffman (deceased). Other survivors: children Ivan, Leila MacDonald, Wilma Miller, Patricia Cooper; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 7 at Spring Lake United Methodist Church, Brooksville, Fla.

Kroeker, Minnie Wiens, 89, Henderson, Neb., died April 6. Spouse: Harold Kroeker (deceased). Parents: Klaas and Susanna Fast Wiens (deceased). Survivors: children Harold, Phillip, Sandra Schmidt; 10 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Lehman, Rosina, 98, Lowville, N.Y., died April 7. Parents: Peter and Mary Kennell Lehman. Funeral: April 9 at Croghan, N.Y.

McLane, H. Dubose, 76, State College, Pa., died Feb. 29 of a heart attack. Parents: Brooks and Curren McLane (deceased). Memorial service: March 25 at Foxdale Retirement Community, State College.

Miller, David, 89, Goshen, Ind., died Feb. 27. Spouse: Alpha Yoder Birky Miller. Parents: Alf and Lovina Miller (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Carol Beachy; three grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 2 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Mennonite Central Committee
invites applications for the position of: RESOURCE NETWORK DIRECTOR

This position carries responsibility for developing program goals and objectives for MCC's fundraising and material resource collection. Qualifications include strong communication and leadership skills, experience in non-profit fundraising, and a deep appreciation for constituent churches.

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Miller, Ohlen, 88, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died April 7. Spouse: Pauline Miller Miller. Parents: Nathan and Anna Hershberger Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Charlie, Thomas, Ned, Glenda Hochstetler, Gayle Brown; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 11 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Peters, Marvin, 71, Henderson, Neb., died April 8. Spouse: Glendora Friesen Peters. Parents: Dietrich and Emma Epp Peters (deceased). Other survivors: children Tim, Rodney, Corey, Bonnie Cruickshank; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 12 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Seitz, Ada Burkhart, 86, Mechanicsburg, Pa., died April 8. Spouse: Marlin Seitz. Parents: Noah and Emma Rohrer Burkhart (deceased). Other survivors: children Gene, Blair, Ann Davis, Mary Jane Melhorn, Nancy Benson; 16 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 11 at Slate Hill Mennonite Church, Camp Hill, Pa.

Wall, Arthur, 84, Topeka, Kan., died April 11 of cancer. Spouse: Mary Wall. Parents: Henry and Helen Bese Wall (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Rosalie Wenger; three grandchildren. Memorial service: April 15 at Southern Hills Mennonite Church, Topeka.

Warkentin, Thelma Froese, 89, Buhler, Kan., died April 6. Spouse: Albert Warkentin. Parents: Curt and Anna Siemens Froese (deceased). Other survivors: children Darwin, Rose Diasio, Betty Krehbiel; nine grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

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classifieds

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has fall openings for teaching positions in ***middle school science/math, kindergarten*** and ***1st grade***. Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Berne, Ind., seeks a ***director of Christian education***. The position will be full-time. Send resume by May 15, 2000. To inquire further for job description, contact First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-3108; email craig@firstmennonite.org

- **MCC Bike San Juans, *Aug. 7-11, 2000:*** Cycle the San Juan Islands in Washington for the benefit of MCC. Lodging, food, support provided. Cost $340. For information: http://www.mcc.org/BikeOregon.html or contact MCC Bike Oregon, Phil Amaya, 10765 S. Barnards Rd., Canby, OR 97013; 503-651-3693; email amaya@gingerich.com

- **Bethany Birches Camp**, Plymouth, Vt., has paid positions open, June 18-Aug. 11, 2000. Needed are ***cook, assistant cook, counselors and maintenance worker***. Also needed are weekly kitchen and maintenance volunteers. More information: 2610 Lynds Hill Road, Plymouth, VT 05056; 802-672-3959; email bbc@valley.net

- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** welcomes applicants for full-time ***middle school social studies/science*** teaching position starting 8/2000. Supportive school community awaits you! Home page http://home.ptd.net/~hmsstaff

  Contact Tom Burnett, Administrator, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705; email tburnett@ptd.net

- **Manheim Christian Day School** has an opening for a ***1st grade teacher*** for the 2000-2001 school year. Bachelor's degree in education required; early childhood emphasis preferred. Send letter of application, resume and application to Crist Peachey, Administrator, MCDS, 686 Lebanon Road, Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a candidate for the position of full-time ***youth pastor***. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. Located in southeastern Pa., Franconia has an exciting and growing jr. and sr. high youth program. Interested people should send resume to Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email info@franconiamennonite.org

- **Streams in the Desert retreat** for families who cope with long-term mental illness, ***June 9-11*** at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Resource people include Ruth Naylor, Rod Deaton and Lynn Miller. Sponsored by MMA Stewardship Education Center. Registration due May 19, 2000. For information, contact Paul D. Leichty, retreat coordinator; 219-825-5649; phone/fax toll-free 877-214-9838; email PDLeichty@cresources.org

- **River East MB Church** is seeking additional members for its ***pastoral team***. Women and men with gifts in the areas of pastoral care, discipling, preaching, coordination and outreach are invited to apply.

  Please direct inquires or CVs to Pastoral Search Committee, River East MB Church, 755 McLeod Ave., Winnipeg, MB R2K 0B8. Inquiries can also be made by calling the church at 204-663-5096; email schubert@pangea.ca

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a multiracial, inner-city elementary school, has teaching positions available. We are in search of a full-time ***5th/6th-grade teacher***, and part-time teachers for ***art, music, library and computers*** (can combine for full-time). Ten-month contracts begin Aug. 14, 2000.

  For more information contact Marv Friesen, Principal, CMLC, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632; 773-735-9304.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 accredited school accountable to local Mennonite churches, seeks people committed to Jesus Christ to fill positions that will equip students for a life of discipleship. The following positions are available in August 2000: ***Business administrator*** to plan and oversee programs and activities in finance, technology and facility improvement, and to participate in public relations and development endeavors. ***Math/science teacher(s)*** for middle school and high school courses. ***5th grade teacher*** for self-contained classroom. ***Part-time Spanish teacher*** for high school courses.

  Please contact Glenna J. Hershberger, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; 610-286-0353; email pp002979@mindspring.com

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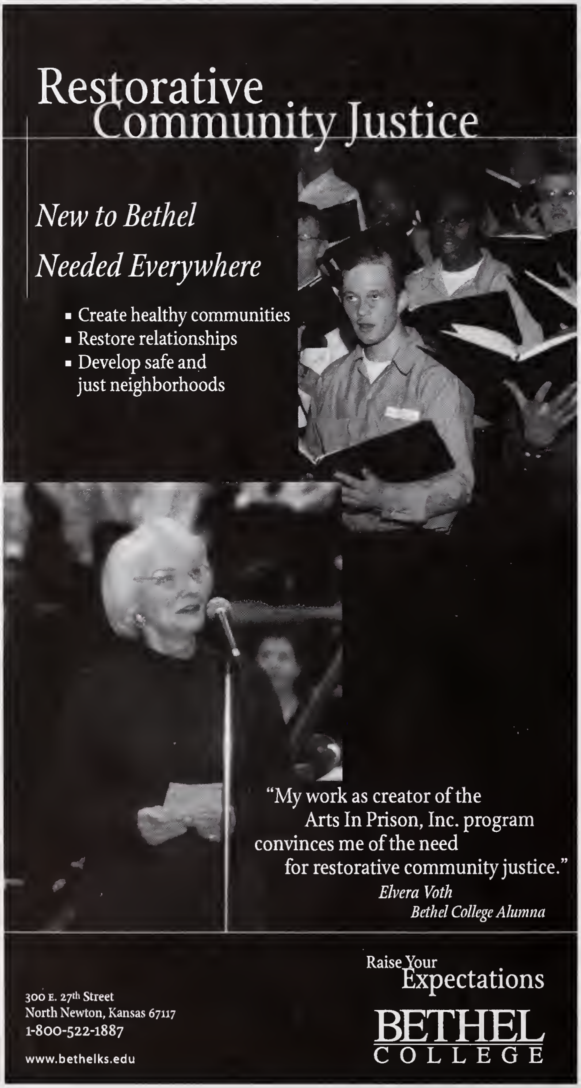
  Send resumes to VP of Human Resources, Schowalter Villa, 200 W. Cedar, Hesston, KS 67062.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  Contact Amal Friesen, 15406 Watercress Dr., Cassopolis, MI 49031; 616-476-9744.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School** is accepting applications for ***director of development*** to establish and manage the development program for building the school's planned giving. Candidates will have experience in philanthropic development for a Christian organization, possess administrative skills, and have strong communication and relationship building skills. WFCS is a K-8 Mennonite elementary-middle school founded in 1941. Contact Development Committee Chair, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; email glenny@epix.net

- **Eastern Mennonite University** announces two ***business faculty*** positions. Ph.D. or DBA in ***information systems*** or related field. Background in decision sciences and quantitative methods also helpful. Teaching and industry experience preferred. Ph.D. or DBA in ***marketing*** or related field. Teaching and industry experience preferred. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Herbert Swartz, Interim VP and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for ***head coach, baseball***, a part-time position beginning July 1, 2000, for the 2000-2001 academic year and beyond. Planning and recruitment work could start earlier. Responsibilities include recruiting quality student-athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budgets and schedules. B.A. required, M.A. preferred with instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the college level. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

  Please send resume and three letters of reference to Paul Keim, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through our web site at www.goshen.edu under "employment." Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

- **Goshen College** is seeking an ***Umble Center theater technical director/house manager***. Position to begin July 1, 2000, with earlier starting date possible. Responsible for proscenium/thrust theater space and all supporting spaces in Umble Center, supervision of lighting, audio, set, make-up, costumes and house managing for events at Umble Center and lighting in two other facilities, hiring and supervising students, scheduling of Umble spaces. Computer skills, experience with rigging system and safety training required. B.A. required with M.A./M.F.A. preferred; strong background in technical theater with 2-3 years experience, supervisory experience and interest in assisting in college instruction.

  To apply, send letter of application, resume and three letters of professional reference to Dean's Office, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-535-7060; email dean@goshen.edu. We encourage applications through the Goshen College web site at www.goshen.edu under "employment." Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Faculty members are expected to share that commitment. Review of applications will begin May 10, 2000. The position will remain open until filled.

Advertising space is available to congregations, conferences, businesses and churchwide boards. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. Call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

by Gordon Houser

A list of books that may be helpful in our Christian lives:

Women Without Men: Mennonite Refugees of the Second World War by Marlene Epp (University of Toronto Press, 2000, $21.95 Cdn.) focuses on the intersection of gender, war and immigration. Epp offers a better understanding of the culture of postwar immigrants and postwar families, the workings of refugee settlement agencies and the functioning of postwar ethnic communities in Canada, Germany and Paraguay.

Judges by Terry L. Brensinger (Herald Press, 2000, $21.99) is the newest volume in the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series. Brensinger explains the ups and downs of the Israelites during the period of the Judges and provides practical applications for such contemporary issues as religious unfaithfulness, the nature of community, the roles and responsibilities of leaders, and war and violence.

It Takes Two to Tangle by Philip Wiebe (Kindred Productions, 2000, $8.50) invites readers to perceive, enjoy and express what is amusing about parenting, vacationing together, managing busy schedules, communicating with one's spouse and children, assembling all the multitudinous parts that should constitute a swing set and planning a romantic evening together that just may include a chimney fire.

The 5-Minute New Testament, with commentary by Stephen Arterburn (Tyndale, 2000, $9.99), presents the entire New Living Translation New Testament in 365 five-minute daily readings. At the beginning of each reading is a topical statement to help one focus on the passage that is about to be read. At the conclusion of each passage is a question or two to ponder for that day.

We Can Do That, Too! Hunger Education Activities That Work (Church World Service, 2000, $1 each) is a 20-page collection of easy-to-use worship materials, simulation games and dramas for congregational and community education settings. To order write CWS, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515.

Cooperating Congregations: Portraits of Mission Strategies by Gilson A. C. Waldkoenig and William O. Avery (The Alban Institute, 2000, $19.95) is based on an intensive study of five cooperative ministry ventures and looks at how each takes a unique approach in addressing its own mission context.

Tasting the Dust by Jean Janzen (Good Books, 2000, $9.95) is the latest collection of poems by Janzen, who received The Creative Writing Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Several of the poems appeared in *The Mennonite.*

Faith Works: Lessons from the Life of an Activist Preacher by Jim Wallis (Random House, 2000, $23.95) is part memoir, part inspirational game plan for transforming our lives and our society, and part primer on how we can all affect social change through community involvement. In 15 essays, Wallis covers topics from seeing beyond party lines and labels to pursuing common goals from which all of society will benefit to how the average person can play a part in overcoming poverty.

The Daily Book of Common Prayer: Readings and Prayers Through the Year, compiled by Owen Collins (Eerdmans, 2000, $15), draws directly on material from the original 1662 Prayer Book, providing a page of devotional readings for each day of the year.

Can Our Church Live? Redeveloping Congregations in Decline by Alice Mann (The Alban Institute, 2000, $18.95) explains how the natural life cycle of a congregation as well as other internal and external factors can produce a congregation in real trouble.

Recommended reading

Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition by Christine D. Pohl (Eerdmans, 1999, $15) calls all Christians to the practice of hospitality. Pohl combines biblical and historical research with extensive interviews with people in contemporary communities of hospitality. The book is a good balance of theory and practice as she looks at the practice of hospitality in the early church and through history, then examines the practice of eight current communities. She notes that "offering care to strangers became one of the distinguishing marks of the authenticity of the Christian gospel and the church." She provides ample incentive to give such practice priority.—*gh*

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J. Lorne Peachey

Visiting nurses, lighthouses and picnic shelters ...

What is your image of the church? That was the question General Conference (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) members were asked last fall as a part of the survey, "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church." The answers from 487 groups in 327 congregations show we are a diverse people with vivid imaginations.

We compare ourselves to anything from an adoption agency to a welcoming center on the interstate. We see the church as a garden, a nursery, an orchestra or an oasis. The more nautical among us compare the church to a lighthouse, a beacon, an anchor or a harbor. One congregation sees itself as a streetlight, two as candles—one in a window, another on the prairie. For some people the church is a hospital, for others a visiting nurse. And there's the image of a dandelion: deeply rooted, persistent, misunderstood, noticeable, spreading everywhere.

My own image of the church is a picnic shelter. That comes from cross-country bicycle trips, where I learned the value of these structures to get out of the rain, the wind or the sun. Picnic shelters are good protection without isolating you completely from what is going on around you. I also discovered that the fiercer the storm, the higher you have to climb inside the shelter to keep dry and warm, either by standing on a table or crawling into the rafters—to me an image of the church we must also use on occasion.

Images are useful tools to help us understand complex concepts by comparing them to simpler and more familiar things. The image does not substitute for the reality, nor can it explain that reality in full. Yet through images we often learn new truths or come to see things in a new light.

We need to pay attention to images. The way we look at something or the way we think it should be often determines our response. As a result, reality often begins to match the image.

For example, if we see the church as a defender of truth, we will develop attitudes and reward the behavior that built that image. If the church is seen as a place to recharge one's batteries, we will structure it around what gives strength to our lives. If our image of the church is that of a refuge, congregational life will emphasize those aspects of worship and education that minister to needy people.

None of these images—or the dozens of others found in the envisioning study—is either right or wrong. All are ways of getting at the truth. All show part of what the church is about, although none can describe it completely. All are necessary to get the whole picture.

This is the message of the apostle Paul in his image of the church as a body. All are necessary. All contribute to the good of the whole. None is superior to the other. "The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up only one body. So it is with the body of Christ" (1 Corinthians 12:12 NLT).

In this day when GCs and MCs are transforming ourselves into Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA, we need to be aware of the images of the church we have—as individuals, as congregations and as denominations. Our response to what is new will be determined, often more than we realize, by our images of the church and what we think it should be. Whether these be visiting nurses, lighthouses or picnic shelters.—*jlp*

... and cities of refuge

In his article on the church's struggle with homosexuality and membership (page 6), Richard Kauffman suggests another image for some churches: congregations of refuge for homosexuals who want to relate to the new Mennonite Church USA. This is not a new idea—I've heard it suggested before in various contexts. But until now it's a concept that's not been developed as a serious option.

The idea for congregations of refuge is based on the Old Testament provision for some cities as special places of safety for people estranged from the wider community for various reasons. This concept may provide a way through what is beginning to look like an impasse for us. It may, that is, if we take seriously our diversity as a people of God; if we believe that the church can have many expressions, just as it has many images; if we believe that God continues to call us to unity; and if we believe that Paul's image of the church as a body with many parts has something to say to us.

As Kauffman notes, another image we Mennonites have of ourselves is being a people who provide an alternative, a third way, to what is conventional. Congregations of refuge may be this third way for us through this tough issue. It's worth considering.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

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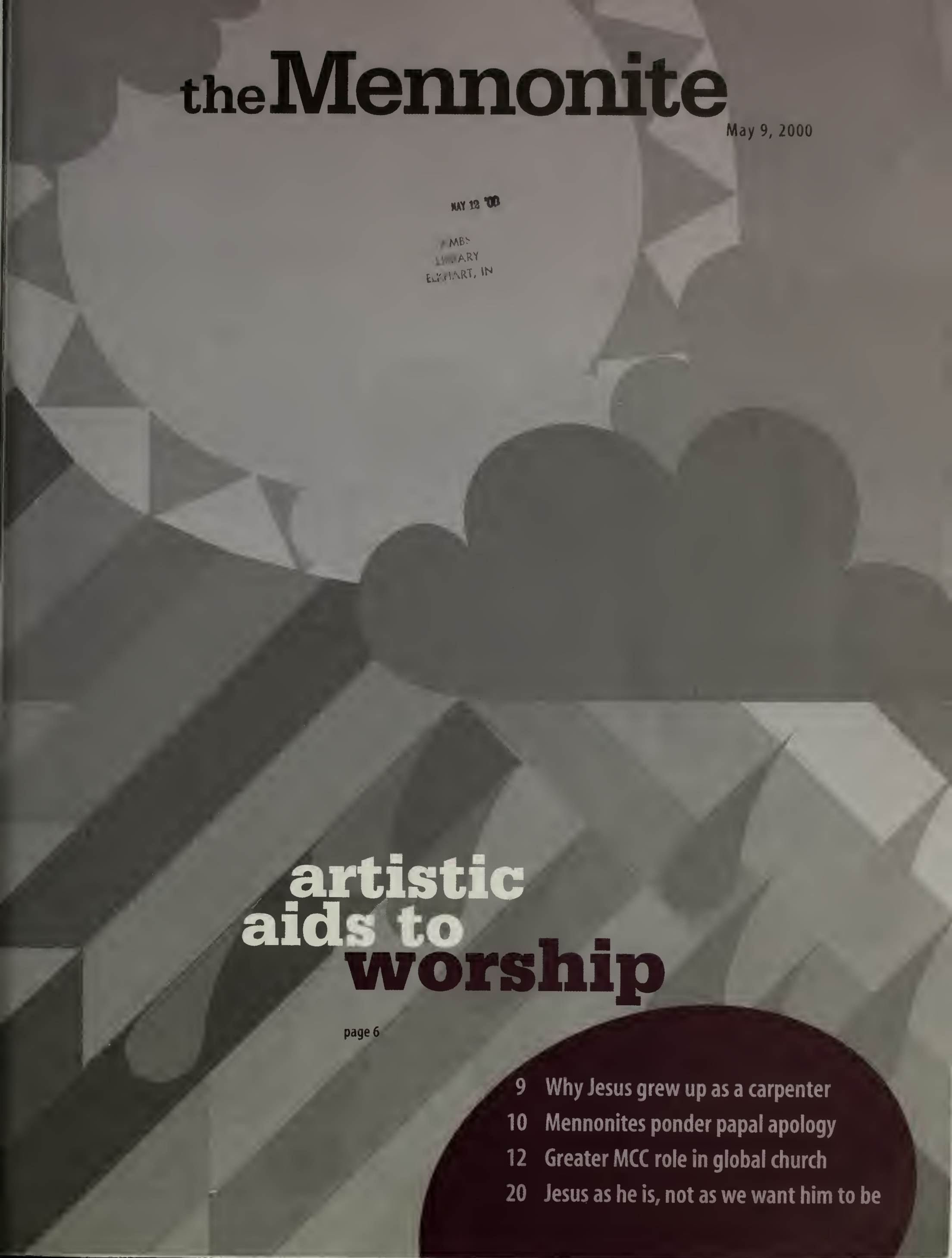


artistic aids to worship

page 6

9 Why Jesus grew up as a carpenter
10 Mennonites ponder papal apology
12 Greater MCC role in global church
20 Jesus as he is, not as we want him to be

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Filling the leadership void

In the April 11, issue, Palmer Becker ("Giving Up and Gaining More") quoted the statistic of how many Mennonite churches need pastors, a statistic often reported in *The Mennonite* recently. When I read these numbers, I wonder not so much about where the pastors are as about what the profiles are of these congregations needing leaders: What vision drives them? Are they at peace with each other? What is their history with previous pastors? From what sources are they willing to seek for leadership? Are they open to leadership? If Mennonite congregations are willing to take hold of the compelling vision put forth by Stanley Green in the same issue ("Leaders for the 21st Century"), I believe gifted, Spirit-filled people will step forward to give leadership.—*Jill Landis Snider, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Thank you for the Green and Becker articles on pastoral leadership. What is happening that our congregations are not producing pastors? Could it be that we have lost a sense of the call of God to the pastoral ministry? I fear the present attention given to management science as a way of developing leaders will leave us with a lot of charisma but little content in the pastoral ministry. I think pastors need to understand the Scriptures and good biblical and Anabaptist theology if people in the congregation are to be fed an uplifting spiritual message for the next century.—*Paul M. Zehr, Lancaster, Pa.*

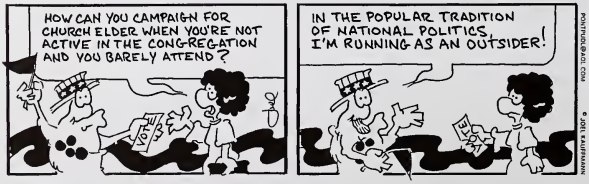
Wrong focus

Green and Becker's great articles on leadership were encouraging and helpful if the church is going to develop effective and growing congregations that are reaching their communities in the 21st century.

In direct contrast to that encouragement was "The Goodness of Imperfection" by Ted Lewis in the same issue. This article came across as an attack on churches that are trying to reach the unchurched through high technology and relevant methods that connect with people in our culture. The author admitted that user-friendly churches are reaching those who would otherwise not attend a church. But his article communicates it is preferable to have a church that is mediocre, has a poor quality worship experience and is anti-growth at worst or unconcerned about growth at best.

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann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I am a Mennonite pastor who has planted a growing user-friendly church that has reached hundreds of unchurched people over the last 14 years. In some Mennonite circles, however, it seems we are suspected of doing something wrong and non-Anabaptist. Being user-friendly or seeker-friendly and designing a worship experience that authentically connects with the never-churched or the church dropout does not mean changing the message. The apostle Paul promotes the use of various methods to reach people when he said: "I have been all things to all sorts of people that by every possible means I might win some to God" (1 Corinthians 9:22). Jesus was the master of speaking the language of the various cultures.

Why should we be so arrogant as to think the worship that we are most comfortable with is the only right way? It seems we are more focused on maintaining status quo than striving for excellence and moving beyond our comfort zone so we might impact our world for Jesus Christ.—*Dennis Gingerich, Cape Coral, Fla.*

The joy of Tupperware

We don't require much of our church magazine editors. Only nights away from home, recurrent deadlines, controversies too numerous to mention, theological critique ad nauseam and ready ridicule should the occasional beery typo get past proofreaders' attention. Not much at all.

But then to see such a vulnerable, moving editorial tying Easter with Tupperware containers ("Easter is 21 Tupperware Containers in Your Refrigerator," April 18) amid such light a load, I am left too grateful to maintain this joking banter.

Thanks, J. Lorne, for letting us into your and Emily's world. You did not have to, but you did. And because you took this risk, I also found some measure of consolation in the midst of desolation. That is, I have come to understand, what Easter is supposed to be about.—*Tobin Miller Shearer, Lancaster, Pa.*

Thanks for the creative, thought-provoking editorial in the April 18 issue. Many readers, including myself, need to be reminded to get beyond "the doubts and depressions of my

theMennonite

Vol. 3, No. 18, May 9, 2000

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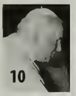
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8 **The rich walk of stewardship**
God doesn't demand that we get it right, just that we do our best

9 **Why Jesus grew up in a carpenter's home**
He learned to see potential, work hands-on and develop patience

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15 **Newsbriefs**

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20 **Editorial**
Jesus as he is, not as we want him to be

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y readers say

Good Fridays" and remember "the little signs of new life" that continue in spite of serious personal and family illness.—*Marjorie Neufeld, Quincy, Mass.*

Her and hymn

In response to Frank Horst's April 18 letter regarding the hymn "Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, #482), I offer the following information:

When the text for this hymn was submitted to the Hymnal Council, it was titled, "O Mother God, You Gave Me Birth." Because the council had committed itself to use only those images for God (in new texts) which can be found in Scripture, this text received full discussion. We wholeheartedly agreed that we needed texts which invite us to worship a God who is not imaged as exclusively masculine. However, because God is not directly addressed as "Mother" in our Scriptures, we felt this text might meet resistance in the church. Because we could easily support the notion of a "mothering God" revealed in Scripture (see, for example, Deuteronomy 32:18; Isaiah 42:14; Isaiah 66:13; Hosea 13:8; Matthew 23:37; John 3:3-7), we invited poet Jean Janzen to alter the text slightly to incorporate our concerns. She willingly complied, and we have, as a result, a beautiful and evocative text for worship.

This text, based on writings of the English mystic Julian of Norwich, follows in a long tradition of orthodox Christian writings (from as early as the second century) in which God, Jesus and the Spirit are imaged as feminine.

Finally, I agree with Horst that faithful Anabaptists do not worship female gods. Nor do we worship male gods. Instead, we worship a God who is imaged in manifold ways but who is also beyond our capacity to imagine. —*Marlene Kropf, Elkhart, Ind.*

Cover illustration by Robert Regier

Livestock's place

John Zimmerman ("The Peaceable Kingdom at Hand," March 28) acknowledges that vegetarians must take supplements in order to obtain sufficient iron, zinc and vitamin B-12. While supplements may be an option for well-off Americans, what about the billions of people in the world who cannot afford these or may not even have access to them?

We must also remember that most of the land on our planet cannot be planted in crops such as grains and beans without causing serious soil erosion. Once the soil is gone, people starve. The only sensible thing to do with highly erodible land is to leave it in its native vegetation, such as grass. Grass, of course, is useless as food for human beings—unless you allow it to be grazed by cattle, sheep, goats and other ruminants, who convert grass to protein-, mineral- and vitamin-rich meat and milk.

If we wish to avoid humanmade chemical fertilizers, which are expensive and environmentally destructive, we need manure from livestock to maintain soil fertility.

I don't deny the damage that overgrazing has done in many places. Much less would I defend the sick and cruel factory-farm model that dominates livestock production in our country. But I do contend that from the standpoint of nutrition, ecology and social justice, there is a place for livestock animals if they are raised right. Just ask the folks at Heifer Project International.—*Kathy Scharplaz, Minneapolis, Kan.*

Move forward together

For some time now I have been frustrated about the two extremes in the Mennonite church but have not been able to put into words what I was feeling. When I read the letter by Kurt Horst (April 25), I said to myself, "That expresses my emotions perfectly." It feels as if both sides are attempting to pull us apart rather than helping us come together. As one who dearly loves the Mennonite Church, these past few years have been very painful to me as I watch others attempt to destroy the good work that has been done in the name of Christ. I plead with those who are forcing their views of homosexualtiy on us, as well as those who are threatening to leave the denomination, to please, in a Christlike attitude, lay aside your own personal desires so that God's kingdom can move forward.—*Nelson Shenk, Bally, Pa.*

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You can't
grow food
in a mud
slide

God created the earth to bring forth fruit, plants and trees, then pronounced it "good." In developing countries, poor people cut down trees so they can cook and heat their homes; when they cut down trees on hillsides, the soil they need for growing food slides away. People in all parts of the world and all income brackets also cut down trees, destroy the soil, foul the water and pollute the air, and call it "progress."

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The godliness of beauty

Creation of quilted banners draws a congregation and others closer to God.

by Elaine Klaassen

Six beautiful, quilted banners hung high on the steep, modern walls of the First Mennonite Church sanctuary in Hillsboro, Kan. On that Sunday, May 16, 1999, people from all over the Midwest came to celebrate them. The 4 foot by 12 foot banners depicted Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost and planting-harvest. Their palettes blended with the bright-colored glass in the sanctuary windows. This was the first time all six banners were on display at the same time.

My 84-year-old mother helped create these banners. There was no way I would miss the dedication service, though I had to drive all the way from Minneapolis. I was there to hear her say the project was one of the highlights of her life.

Keith Harder, the church's pastor, first imagined the banners, and a small committee carried the vision forward, then asked artist Robert Regier, retired professor of art at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., to design them. My mother, Marcella Klaassen, and her friend Sylvia Abrahams cut and pieced together the liturgical banners. In a congregation full of quilters, many volunteers showed up to do the fine-stitching, including my mother and Sylvia. Financial support came from memorial gifts in honor of Esther Lindteigen and O'Linda Klassen, two women from the church dedicated to quilting. Someone always appeared to take care of things such as raising the cutting tables, setting up quilting frames and hanging the banners.

A quilt declares community—the gathering of many pieces, expressing individuality and variety, but sewn together to complete a cohesive form.

The congregation of about 120 active members gave its energy to bring the banners to life. The process, however familiar, was as stunning as the finished artifacts. As Robert says, "A quilt declares community—the gathering of many pieces, expressing individuality and variety, but sewn together to complete a cohesive form."

No one in Hillsboro seemed mystified by the idea that when people work together they can get a lot done. But the notion that beauty has transforming power and can take you beyond yourself was less familiar.

Much of the dedication service focused on explaining why Mennonites and other Christians have been suspicious of visual arts in worship.

I felt no need to promote the value of visual arts in worship; I was simply moved by the beauty of these banners. They carried me to a new place.

Each banner has three straight edges—the top and both sides. Each bottom edge follows the shape of the images in that part of the design.

A grid of diagonal pieces of cloth, not necessarily in repeated patterns like a typical quilt, makes up the background of each banner in a cubist style. At the same time, the geometrical shapes, in arresting luminous color combinations, are not irregular enough to look like a crazy quilt. Intermingled with these backgrounds are symbolic, stylized images.

Rainbow canopy: On the Christmas banner, an ox and a lamb look into a black manger and are lit by the bright light of a rainbow canopy. Their unfettered innocence calls to mind the ignorant bliss of the garden of Eden or of the animals trotting onto Noah's Ark, unaware of the devastation all around. A laid-back, trumpet-playing angel floats above the manger, confident that hope is truly our only option.

On the Lenten banner are four black symbols—the crown of thorns, waves, a Latin cross enshrouded in dark purples and magentas and the cock that crowed three times. The face of the rooster could be Peter's, and the waves might show his wish to be able to walk on water, like Jesus.

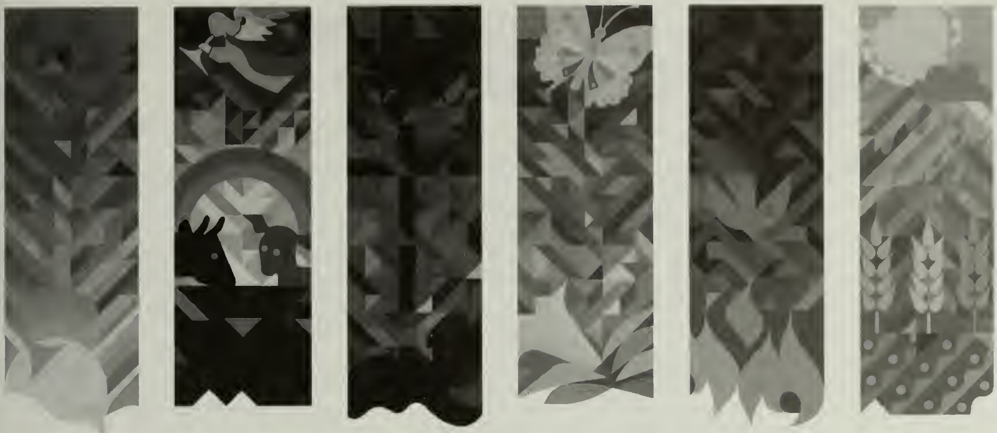
On the Pentecost banner a dove descends from a mysterious darkness. In the midst of the flames at the bottom is a nearly circular form that could be a lens revealing the complex ardor of the Holy Spirit.

The image in the Advent banner is of trumpets pointing down at us, engaging us. It is the only banner without images of some kind of life form.

The banners for Easter and planting-harvest take us to a place of new DNA, pristine and healthy. A gently tilting lily, an intricate butterfly, equally fat raindrops and kernels of wheat burst with goodness.

Love for the envisioned beauty that lay ahead inspired the quilters to persevere. My mother and Sylvia supplied technical knowhow. My mother was so eager to get started, she cut out the entire first banner (Advent) on her dining room table. The rest of the cutting was done on large church tables raised onto blocks. Sylvia, following the colors on the pattern, sewed everything together by machine.

Because Robert, the designer, knew almost nothing about quiltmaking, he took it to new levels. My mother says almost everything they did was new, and she is a veteran quilter.



From left, the liturgical banners represent Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and planting-harvest.

Images courtesy of Robert Regier

Robert says, "They've been courageous and patient—and too polite to tell me it would've been good if I'd known more about quilting."

The quilters had to make various creative decisions, such as using heavy batting, the filler, between the design layer and the backing, to give the banners more dimension, my mother says. They also decided "not to do extensive quilting—just enough to give it impact," she says. Their decisions were like those made by classical musicians in realizing someone else's scores.

The difference between the computer designs and the finished quilts is unfathomable. The strength of the banners grew exponentially with each person's contribution. Robert says the final result "vastly exceeded [my] expectations."

Complete freedom: Robert, now in retirement, fulfills numerous commissions. This one took on a life of its own. He said the ideas came to him easily. He designed all six banners in about a month. At first he thought the planning committee would tell him which symbols to use for each banner. "I shortly discovered I was to exercise complete freedom and make the symbol selection myself," he says. The balance between the specific framework and the open-ended possibilities was perfect.

True to the nature and values of the community out of which these banners emerged, Sylvia, who kept a daily progress log, and my mother, who inherited a gene for record keeping, prepared the history of the 26-month process for the church archives. My mother made sure the names of everyone who contributed were recorded on the backs of the banners.

Following the dedication, the church displayed one banner at a time, the one for the appropriate season, in the sanctuary. The church had no plans to show them all at once again. Some people suggested a yearly showing, but that idea was voted down.

Once a congregation becomes the steward of such a treasure, policies have to be established. A couple of banners were loaned to other groups before the dedication, but the church decided that lending would be discontinued. Some Mennonite churches have purchased the patterns and have either completed their set of banners or are in process. Robert owns the copyright.

I'm still trying to figure out why I've felt so compelled to write about these liturgical banners. Let me try to explain.

First, the quilt-making process that took place is such a strong metaphor for how we know God. The contrast between the original design and the tangible reality is the same contrast we see between our idea of God and the reality of God in our lives through making many tiny decisions based on our idea. Our ideas are important. And we must be willing to work hard. Our ideas get bigger and are transported into living reality as we work on them.

Second is the importance of beauty in accessing God. The direct experience of beauty makes us happy. Unhappiness makes us stupid and mean, while happiness leads us into goodness, into godliness.

Third, the memory of beautiful things also sustains us and propels us. I can think about a banner hanging in that Kansas church, know it's there, take heart and praise God. As I write, the banner for Lent is on display. I imagine the Saturday afternoon between Good Friday and Easter when the folks come into the sanctuary, put protective blankets on the tops of the pews, place planks on the cloth, stand up their tall ladders and hang the Easter banner.

Elaine Klaassen lives in Minneapolis.

The contrast between the original design and the tangible reality is the same contrast we see between our idea of God and the reality of God in our lives through making many tiny decisions based on our idea.

The rich walk of stewardship

God doesn't demand that we always get it right but that we simply do our best.

by Howard L. Brenneman

Several years ago, I started losing weight. I didn't know why, but I lost 45 pounds. I thought it was great, but I became thirsty often, and my vision began to change. When I also showed other symptoms, Sharon, my wife, said she was afraid for me to go out on a business trip, fearing diabetes. She made a doctor's appointment for me.

My doctor told me my blood sugar was high and that I indeed had diabetes. I asked him about getting a second opinion. He said, "You can get a second opinion if you want, but it's pretty easy to diagnose." When I first heard the news, it bothered me so much I didn't want even my children to know.

Gradually I faced the fact that over the years I hadn't taken good care of my body. I also had to face the fact that my lifestyle must change if I was to fight this disease. Eating healthier food, avoiding stress and exercising regularly had to become daily habits—not only when it was convenient.

To switch courses in the way I lived, God had to alter my perspective. I was facing a new stewardship question. I asked myself anew how I was going to live this life God gave me.

I have since made many changes. The daily challenge doesn't disappear. There are days at 5 a.m. when I don't feel like jogging. But I couldn't feel better and healthier. Getting diabetes probably saved my life.

To switch courses in the way I lived, God had to alter my perspective. I was facing a new stewardship question. I asked myself anew how I was going to live this life God gave me.

This experience with diabetes made me flash back to stewardship influences I had growing up and as a young adult. When I was a child in Kansas, my parents worked hard in farming and factory work. They did not have a large amount to give, but the tithe always was their first expense. I never sensed this was done out of obligation but as a joyous act because God had been good to them.

During the last 15 years of my father's life, my parents spent the winter months in Texas, volunteering in maintenance and office work at Rio Grande Bible College. My father was proud of the plaque they received for their years of service. That left a huge impression on me. I'm sure many church members have similar stewardship memories of their parents.

I also had the opportunity to be surrounded by associates in the business world at Hesston Corporation in Kansas who believed in stewardship at a corporate and personal level. They started a foundation funded by profits and individual donations. One of the techniques used was to challenge each other to personal matches to support programs. As a young executive, I was invited to join in. This often stretched Sharon and me to the maximum, but we were continually blessed by being pushed to the limit.

Later, when the call came to us to join Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) in Indiana and work at leading the church toward a lifestyle of stewardship and mutual aid, it seemed like a natural extension of what we believed.

Yet the decision was still a challenge about how I should spend my time and talents. I was unsure whether I was ready to leave my consulting business, our family and long-term friendships in Kansas. God talked to us through other people. We received encouragement from friends, but the most significant reinforcement came from our children. Viewing tithing and volunteer work as an important element in their own lives, they saw MMA as a tremendous opportunity for us. This made us sense even more that stewardship was an important principle to pass on to the next generation. As with other stewardship experiences, MMA turned out to offer rewards we didn't dream of seven years ago. Every year here, this experience at MMA grows richer and more fulfilling.

With God's help, the principle of stewardship has pushed me to do things beyond what I thought possible. My definition of stewardship has expanded to encompass caring for all God's gifts to me—everything I am and have to offer.

Some people view Christian stewardship as a burden to be borne. That's obviously not my view. Living a life of good stewardship is not always easy—in fact, it's often the opposite. But God never demands that we get it right. Probably none of us will ever get it completely right, but that's not important. God simply asks us to do our best.

Howard L. Brenneman is president and CEO of MMA in Goshen, Ind.

Why Jesus grew up in a carpenter's home

Insights from the wife of a cabinetmaker

by Sarah J. Breese McCoy

Tom, my husband, is a petroleum engineer for a large oil company, but for many years he has enjoyed woodworking as a hobby. I have proudly watched him craft shelves, cabinets, picture frames and beautiful furniture for our family and friends. As he has gained experience and skill (and a considerable number of odd-looking tools), I have pondered how this was also the occupation of Jesus' earthly father, Joseph (Matthew 13:55).

God, who never does things haphazardly or without planning, surely had a reason for placing Jesus in the home of a man who made things out of wood for a living. Why not a shepherd? He described himself as the Good Shepherd (John 10:11). Why not a fisherman? He would later choose some of them as his disciples and teach them to cast a net for souls. Why not a priest? He would someday become our High Priest (Hebrews 3:1). Here are three possible reasons for Jesus to grow up apprenticing in his dad's wood shop:

1. Carpenters see potential. When my husband starts a project, he has to select the proper materials. Yet these bear little resemblance to the appearance of the finished product he has in mind. The key to finding the appropriate substance lies in the ability to look past imperfections and realize potential.

The knots and irregularities of a gnarly tree trunk added great beauty and interest to the surface of a kitchen table he made after they had been properly smoothed, stained and polished. Perhaps Jesus used this lesson from his father to learn that hot-headed zealots like James and John (Luke 9:54) or a doubting Thomas (John 20:24-25) or a cowardly and quick-tongued Peter (Matthew 26:33-35,74) might be wonderful choices as his disciples. Surely his woodworking experience helped him see the potential in Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9), a woman of questionable reputation, or in the man possessed by a legion of demons (Luke 8:27-35). Christians today can also look back at what they were before the Lord found them and say, "How far God has brought me!"

2. Carpenters work hands-on. Woodworking is without question a hands-on job. My husband picks up boards and blocks and carves them, shapes them, works them and smooths them. Jesus must have spent many hours watching his father hammer, drill and cut. He learned that materials are changed when they are touched by the master's hands. Consider how Jesus later used touch. He laid his hands on little children brought to him for his blessing (Matthew 19:13), and he took the hand of the 12-year-old girl who had passed away and told her to arise (Mark 5:41). He once spat on the ground, made clay of the spittle and anointed the eyes of a blind man who had come for healing (John 9:6). He even dared to touch the leper who said to him, "If you choose, you can make me clean" (Matthew 8:2-3). Clearly Jesus was not afraid to be hands-on with his subject material.

3. Carpenters develop patience. Most of my husband's woodworking projects take considerable time, especially if he does them the old-fashioned way, without power tools. Jesus must have watched Joseph work on a particular piece for days or weeks, patiently waiting for the finished product. Jesus later needed such patience with stubborn and sometimes faithless followers.

At one point his disciples brought a man and his son to Jesus, wondering why they couldn't cast a demon out of the boy. Jesus asked in frustration, "How much longer must I be with you?" (Matthew 17:17). Another time the people's lack of faith prevented Jesus from doing miracles in his home country, and "he was amazed at their unbelief" (Mark 6:6). He said of Jerusalem, "How often have I desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" (Luke 13:34).

Yet in the midst of the trials of working with faulty, sinful human beings, Jesus was patient and long-suffering, allowing the contrite a second chance when they made mistakes. The Carpenter realized that people are a long-term work in progress, and he allowed for the fact that they don't become mature overnight.

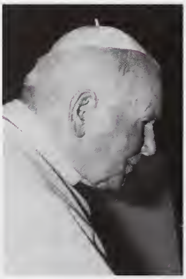
People today are like the Bible characters, in need of a Master Craftsman who can see their potential, work with them hands-on and patiently bring them along over a lifetime of learning to be like him.

People today are like the Bible characters, in need of the Master Craftsman who can see their potential, work with them hands-on and patiently bring them along over a lifetime of learning to be like him. How fortunate we are that God had the foresight to place the Savior in an environment where he could learn as a child exactly how to do these things! The next time my husband brings home an unwieldy or funny-looking chunk of wood for a new project, I'm going to remember how Jesus is working on me and expect to someday see the beautiful finished product.

Sarah J. Breese McCoy lives in Owasso, Okla.

Mennonites ponder papal apology

Bishop: Request for forgiveness included Anabaptists



We cannot fail to recognize the infidelities to the gospel committed by some of our brethren.

—John Paul II

Mennonites were included when John Paul II delivered his historic request for forgiveness for sins of Catholics committed through the ages, says a Roman Catholic bishop involved in formal conversations with Mennonites.

Neither the March 12 Day of Pardon Mass in St. Peter's Basilica nor a preliminary paper from the Vatican specifically mentioned Anabaptists, who were severely persecuted after their 16th-century break from the Catholic Church. But Joseph Martino, a Catholic bishop from Philadelphia, says, "I would not want Mennonites to think they were not thought of."

Helmut Harder, a Winnipeg theologian and former general secretary of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, agrees. Citing references to "separated brethren" and the Inquisition, he says, "We are part of [those] being addressed here."

Harder and Martino lead Mennonite World Conference (MWC) and Vatican delegations that have been meeting together annually since 1998, with the goal of promoting understanding and overcoming prejudices between Mennonites and Catholics.

Never before had Catholicism's highest earthly authority publicly asked for God's forgiveness for the sins of church members, even sins committed in the name of the church.

"We cannot fail to recognize the infidelities to the gospel committed by some of our brethren, especially during the second millennium," John Paul said in his homily. "Let us ask pardon for the divisions which have occurred among Christians, for the violence some have used in the service of the truth and for the distrustful and hostile attitudes sometimes taken towards the followers of other religions."

The Pope's action raises the issue of what Mennonites should make of it. "The request for forgiveness was not meant to get anything from anybody," Martino says. But he also admits it could spark action or reflection in another group.

Harder says John Paul's apology should prompt others to consider if they should forgive and if they have to ask for forgiveness. "He's really challenging all Christian people to be forgiving people," Harder says.

MWC president Mesach Krisetya says the Pope has set an example for others to follow. "I think apology is the only weapon that can solve the problems of the world."

But Krisetya, an Indonesian, says that for some Mennonites around the globe, any negative feelings toward Catholics may not be mitigated even by a request for forgiveness from the Pope. "They still think they are not really sincere," he says.

German Mennonite pastors Frieder Boller and Wolfgang Krauss have drafted a response critical of the Pope's apology, in part because of the unaddressed issue of political power, starting with Constantine's conversion to Christianity in the third century, thereby joining church and state into one entity and leading to the persecution of dissenters.

"It is … a problem of crimes committed in conjunction with the state or other powers, and not only committed but also planned and carried out jointly," Boller and Krauss write. "In order to assure its power and authority, the Catholic Church, as an institution, pursued this course for one and a half centuries."

But others point to the continuing Mennonite-Catholic dialogue as evidence of the Vatican's wish to address past wrongs. "I think the dialogue between Mennonites and Catholics is also somehow a sign of asking for apology," says Krisetya.

The dialogue, held under the banner of "Toward a Healing of Memories," will continue until until 2002, Harder says, at which point a statement will probably be drafted. "The goal is to … address this question of what do we have to say to each other in the area of healing of the past," Harder says.

Krisetya says a response to the papal apology may also be on the agenda of the MWC General Council meeting to be held in Guatemala in July.

"It seems one should not look a gift confession in the mouth," says LeRoy Friesen, a former professor at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., who converted to Catholicism in 1991.

He notes the authority the Pope has in the Roman Catholic Church. "This is different than having a committee chairman or the moderator speak," says Friesen, who lives in Tylerton, Md.

Says Martino, "Here we have the head of our church saying what needs to be said."*—Rich Preheim*

New CEE curriculum turns Chinese classrooms into laboratory for cross-cultural understanding

ELKHART, Ind.—For Dennette Alwine, teaching conversational English in China means more than discussing the weather. It should also provide ABCs of cross-cultural understanding.

Alwine, a former China Educational Exchange teacher who served in China for seven years, recently completed the first volume of "Students and Teachers Learn Together," a new curriculum for CEE teachers providing English language instruction to Chinese university students. Several CEE teachers are now testing the volume, *Finding Our Commonalities,* with their classes.

"CEE is about exchange," says Alwine, who now lives in Elkhart. "It's about relationship-building. The goal in all of my teaching was breaking down walls."

That same goal provides the foundation for the curriculum. The objective of *Finding Our Commonalities* is to help students learn to use everyday English to initiate the kind of mutual sharing that is the foundation of friendship, Alwine says. For example, students learn how to respond politely to questions in English that would be considered too personal to ask in Chinese culture, such as questions about romantic relationships or political affiliations.

At the same time, the students also learn how to answer in a way that creates opportunities to discuss cultural differences. Students practice responding, "I'm sorry, in China people usually don't ask that question, so I feel a bit uncomfortable about answering that." They also learn to introduce questions with sensitivity by saying, "I have a question, but I'm not sure if it's considered personal in your country."

But the focus on relationship-building does not supplant an emphasis on developing strong technical skills in English, pronunciation, intonation, grammar, vocabulary and sentence patterns, which are all taught with a view to creating English speakers who are both fluent and sensitive, Alwine says.

The curriculum's second and third volumes, *Appreciating Our Differences* and *Exploring Life Values,* are expected to be completed by the end of the year.

"There are a lot of good [English as a Second Language] materials out there, but we wanted to do more than just teach English or just teach culture," says CEE director Myrrl Byler. "The classroom is a great place to promote greater cross-cultural understanding."
—Bethany Swope of MBM News Service

The goal in all my teaching was breaking down walls.

—Dennette Alwine

MCC planning grain shipment to Ethiopia

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is organizing a shipment of 4,500 metric tons of grain to southeastern Ethiopia, where three years of drought have depleted food stocks and left some 8 million people hungry.

The grain will come via Canadian contributions to MCC through the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Financial contributions are also being raised for the project. The shipment is scheduled to arrive in Ethiopia by the end of the month.

Half the shipment, 2,770 metric tons, will go to people in southern Ethiopia. Another 655 metric tons will go to Ethiopian Mennonites who are aiding refugees from Eritrea living in towns north of Ethiopia's capital city, Addis Ababa. In these towns, four or five people are dying daily due to malnutrition and related diseases. Four hundred and fifty metric tons will go to Afar pastoralists, a nomadic people who live in eastern Ethopia near the border with Djibouti. The remainder of the grain will be distributed to where it's needed most.

MCC has supplied 1,400 metric tons of grain to Ethiopia during the past year and a half.*—MCC News Service*

MCC

Women in the Ethiopian village of El Kere collect grain supplied last year by Mennonite Central Committee. In the last year and a half, MCC has sent 1,400 metric tons of grain to the drought-stricken country and is now organizing a shipment of 4,500 metric tons.

MWC proposes greater MCC role in global church

AKRON, Pa.—As the church continues its phenomenal growth in Africa, Asia and Latin America, Mennonite World Conference is recommending Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) broaden its relationship with MWC, including becoming an advocate for the international organization among North American Mennonites.

MCC, which is supported by 17 North American conferences, is considering becoming more international in its structure. In 1997, MCC and MWC embarked on a "journey of mutual exploration," including sending observers to each others' executive committee meetings. That agreement called for a review in 2000, which was presented at MCC's executive committee meeting April 14-15 in Akron.

"MWC member churches, especially those in the [Southern Hemisphere], continue to cry out for mutuality, dignity and respect," wrote MWC staff members Ray Brubacher and Pakisa Tshimika, the review's authors. "MWC is increasingly becoming an important, if not the most important, global arena for the Southern Hemisphere churches."

Brubacher and Tshimika recommended that MCC include more of its staff from around the world in discussions about its relationship with MWC. They also raised the possibilities of MWC appointing members to the MCC executive committee and of MCC providing financial and staff support for a proposed MWC visioning and planning process.

MWC is a fellowship of 84 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in more than 50 countries. Several MCC executive committee members commented that they had little background on MWC and felt many other people are not aware of the organization's vision or purpose. MWC staff reiterated that they want to move beyond the perception that MWC is simply an organization that plans an international assembly every six years.

Historian and former MCC executive secretary John A. Lapp noted that MCC and MWC have a long history of working together. MCC helped organize the 1948 and 1997 assemblies. Over the years, MCC's Peace Office has worked with MWC on peace concerns; since 1997, an MCC staff member has given time to serve as associate secretary of the MWC Peace Council. Last year the two organizations sponsored a Jerusalem seminar for Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Bible teachers from 12 countries.—*MCC News Service*

Professor to be part of church study

Formal discussion of the nature of the relationship between denominations and denominational colleges will now include a Mennonite voice.

Bluffton (Ohio) College professor Perry Bush has been selected to participate in a series of conferences on college-church relationships during the 2000-2001 academic year. The endowed project has been conducted since 1995 by Rhodes College, a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) school in Memphis, Tenn.

Participants will attend three meetings and organize a series of formal discussions on the nature and future of the church relationship to the college at their own institutions.

Ryan Beiler

Weighty matters

Marcia Byler (right) of Agape Fellowship, a Mennonite congregation in Williamsport, Pa., helps weigh an infant during a March medical trip to Uganda. Seven people from Agape Fellowship spent about a week in southern Uganda, joining with local medical personnel to treat 1,500 patients. Conditions treated included malaria and intestinal worms. The Agape members went to Uganda under the auspices of Safe Harbor International, and another team from the congregation is planning to go in August.

Canadian university makes name change

WINNIPEG—Seven months after it began classes, Canada's newest Mennonite undergraduate school has a new name.

In an April 12 ceremony, Canadian Mennonite University was unveiled as the name for the Winnipeg institution, which combines Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Menno Simons College. CMBC was affiliated with Mennonite Church Canada, Concord was Mennonite Brethren and Menno Simons was independent.

The new school, formerly known as Mennonite College Federation, is located on a 23-acre campus adjacent to CMBC in the Winnipeg suburb of Tuxedo. It expects 250 students this fall.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Pennsylvania greenhouse experiences rebirth, God's presence following business disaster

LANCASTER, Pa.—Christmas is a celebration of glad tidings. But for the Witmer family eight years ago, it was nearly a season of professional disaster. Yet in the end, it became an Easter story, one of renewal.

It is the legacy of the black pepper disease outbreak at the family-owned Witmers' Greenhouses in Lancaster.

Black pepper disease is not the affliction's real name. In fact, it is unknown in horticultural circles. But that didn't stop it from destroying an acre of Witmers' blooming poinsettias right at the peak of the 1992 Christmas market.

When employees came in on Dec. 4 to go about their usual pre-Christmas routine of filling orders, they discovered something wrong.

"It looked like you'd thrown a handful of pepper on the poinsettias," says president Jay Witmer. "There were black spots all over. Nobody had ever seen anything like this before."

After extensive testing, plant experts from Penn State would later theorize that a freak combination of weather and humidity prevented a previously applied fumigant from dissipating normally, allowing the active ingredients to burn the petals.

The timing couldn't have been worse. Poinsettia sales were a major part of Witmers' business. Some plants had already been shipped, but the majority remained. There was no choice but to dump everything. The cost was enormous—more than $100,000 for the plants alone. And it was the kind of casualty that insurance doesn't cover.

"We got together as a family and said, 'What are we going to do now?' We had customers counting on us," Witmer recalls.

On top of that, the company had been struggling financially. "It was not a profitable time for us," Witmer says. "So this aggravated the whole situation."

How did they recover? Witmer is quick to answer: "With a lot of people's help. It's as simple as that."

Two days after the disaster, Witmer shared the situation at Sunday worship at his congregation, Sunnyside Mennonite Church in Lancaster. Word got around. Within a day or two a friend dropped by and asked if he could help.

"At that point I didn't know what he was going to do," Witmer says. "He gathered together a group of people who knew us, and they laid out a plan to collect money."

Three Mennonite congregations attended by various family members got involved. Friends, business contacts and members of Mennonite Economic Development Associates put together $57,000 to help.

A competitor sent 1,600 plants with the message: "Pay me in spring if you get straightened around. If not, consider it a gift." Other people offered loans at no or low interest.

"We just felt tremendous support from friends and family," Witmer says. "You really find who sticks by you. It was just tremendously encouraging."

Meanwhile, all the family members took pay cuts. Then they took a look at how they could improve the company. They streamlined operations and adjusted the product mix, focusing on producing annual and perennial starter plants for other greenhouses. In the spring Witmers' grows vegetables and turns to cyclamen and poinsettias in the fall.

It took five years for the company to recover. And it became a defining moment in the family's spiritual pilgrimage. "It made us aware of God's goodness through his people," Witmer says. "It's one of those experiences that I wouldn't have missed for the world, but I don't ever want to go through it again."

He also credits the family's practice of seeking consensus and praying before making important decisions. Tough times, Witmer says, "pulled us together rather than pulled us apart."

Today the company is slightly smaller than when disaster hit in 1992. It employs 21 year-round and as many as 50 in the spring. The business was started in 1898 when Jacob Weaver and his wife Anna began a greenhouse on his father's farm. In 1922, their daughter Miriam married Enos Witmer, who joined the business. Grandson Jay now owns the company with his father, J. Stanley, and uncle E. Ray.—*Wally Kroeker of MEDA News Service*

It made us aware of God's goodness through his people. It's one of those experiences that I wouldn't have missed for the world, but I don't ever want to go through it again.

—Jay Witmer

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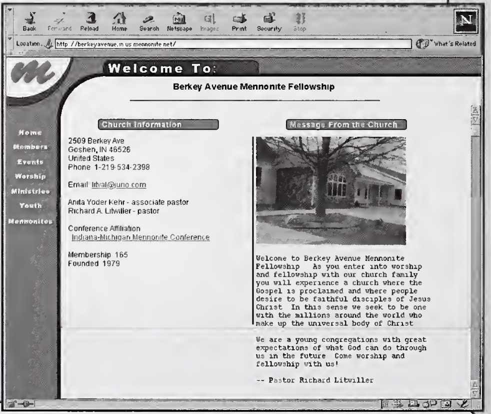

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Email litval@juno.com

Anita Yoder Kehr - associate pastor
Richard A. Litwiller - pastor

Conference Affiliation
Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference

Membership 165
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Schools plan commencement ceremonies

Three schools will hold their commencement ceremonies the weekend of May 19-21, concluding the 2000 round of graduations.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., will confer degrees on 40 students on May 19 at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. The speaker will be Glen Stassen, Christian ethics professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.

Bethel College alumna Claudia A. Limbert will give the commencement address at the North Newton, Kan., school's 107th graduation ceremonies on May 21. A 1978 Bethel graduate, Limbert is campus executive at Penn State-DuBois. She is also a published author of poetry, short stories and nonfiction work.

Helen Prejean, a Catholic nun whose work with death-row inmates was the focus of the award-winning film *Dead Man Walking,* will give the keynote address at Goshen (Ind.) College's commencement on May 21.

Hesston softball team bound for nationals

HESSTON, Kan.—The Hesston College softball team has qualified for the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) Division III national tournament, to be held May 18-20 at Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, Md. This will be the first time a Hesston softball team will compete for the national title.

The Larks, coached by Forrest Miller, compiled an 18-10 record during the regular season. They will represent NJCAA Regions 5, 6 and 7.

Hesston's first game in the double elimination tournament will be May 18 at 12:30 p.m. The team is guaranteed to play at least three games.

New office dedicated for MCC's U.N. liaison

NEW YORK—Mennonite Central Committee and area Mennonite congregations gathered April 8 to dedicate a new office for MCC's United Nations liaison.

The former office had been located at Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, about a mile away from the United Nations. The congregation's pastor, John Rempel, has served as the liaison since the position was started in 1991. The new office is located across the street from the United Nations.

In his remarks at the dedication ceremony, Edgar Metzler, MCC director of international programs, said the office is part of MCC efforts to change structures and conditions that create poverty and injustice. He also noted that the idea of a U.N. liaison was first proposed by longtime MCC leader Orie Miller in the 1960s.—*MCC News Service*

by the way ...

The number of Mennonite Church young people in college jumped 53 percent from 1960 to 1964.—*Mennonite Quarterly Review*

class of 2000

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remember to bring a hanky
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Births

Abbott, Joshua William James, April 4, to Gail (Roth) and Jamie Abbott, Kitchener, Ont.

Biesecker-Mast, Anna Lynn, March 25, to Gerald and Susan Biesecker-Mast, Bluffton, Ohio.

Buckwalter, Marie Omi, April 4, to Mike and Yo Ko Buckwalter, Bluffton, Ohio.

Deckert, Andrew Carl, Feb. 27, to Aaron and Jennifer (Chappell) Deckert, North Newton, Kan.

Hoober, Charles Brett, April 13, to Karen (Brubaker) and Scott Hoober, Northeast, Md.

Mayes, Peyton Thomas, Feb. 21, to Bart and Michele (Bailey) Mayes, Loveland, Colo

McDonough, Grace Elizabeth, April 19, to Brendan and Heather (Krehbiel) McDonough, Wichita, Kan.

Miller, Braden Drew and Trevor Jon (twins), March 27, to Barbara (Yutzy) and Randall Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Norton, Rachel, March 27, to April and Marc Norton, Harrisonburg, Va.

Schroeder, Cooper Jon, April 18, to Kristine (Fletcher) and Rick Schroeder, Manhattan, Kan.

Shoup, Katelyn Sue, April 18, to Dwight and Kathy (Cool) Shoup, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Steinmann, Katarina Anne Dyck, April 10, to Don and Tanya Dyck Steinmann, Kitchener, Ont.

Valverde, Nathan Michael Oyer, April 10, to Joanna Oyer and Doug Valverde, Denver.

Wilkins, Isaac Jeffrey, April 19, to Donna (Peirce) and Jeffrey Wilkins, Sellersville, Pa.

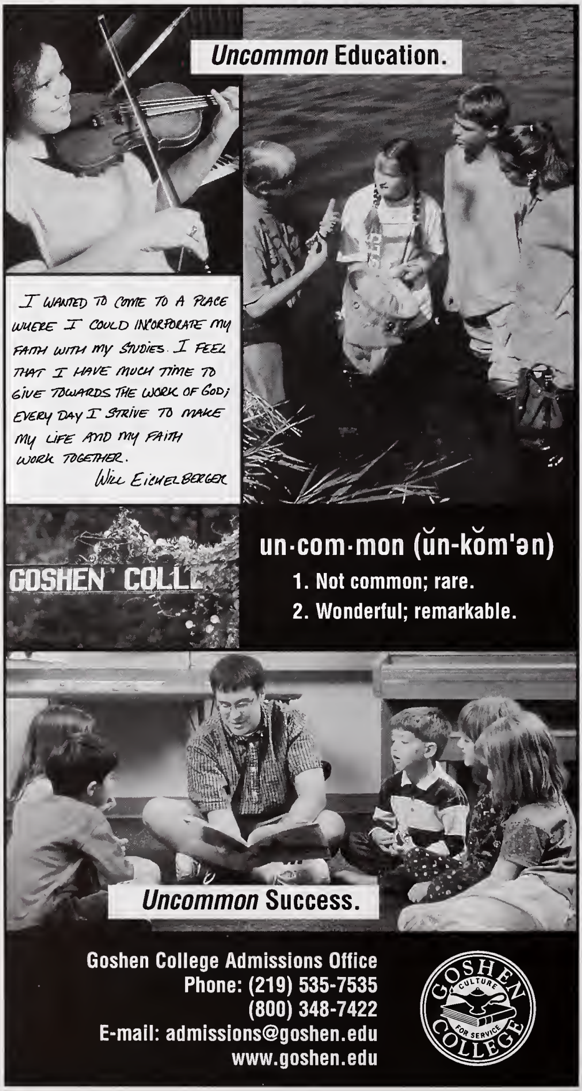
Marriages

Enns/Franz: Lori Enns, Gretna, Man., and Chris Franz, Gretna, March 25 at Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Fast/Snider: Donald Fast, Newton, Kan., and Diane White Snider, Hutchinson, Kan., March 25 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Franz/Schowalter: Earl Franz, Linda, Wash., and Marjorie Fast Schowalter, North Newton, Kan., April 6 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Gredler/Mouberry: Megan Gredler, North Garden, Va., and David Mouberry, Barboursville, Va., March 11 at Charlottesville, Va.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Letters of application along with curriculum vitae or nominations may be sent, in confidence to:

Michael Dick, Chair
Presidential Search Committee
Columbia Bible College
2940 Clearbrook Rd
Abbotsford BC V2T 2Z8
mbresource@bcmb.org

The committee will begin processing resumes in summer 2000.

Deaths

Bush, Joseph, 82, Elverson, Pa., died April 17. Spouse: Linda Kurtz Bush. Parents: Joseph and Blanche Koslauski Bush (deceased). Other survivors: children Ronald, Larry. Funeral: April 21 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Chupp, John, 88, Goshen, Ind., died April 9. Spouse: Carrie Sommer Chupp. Parents: Eli and Kathryn Mullet Chupp (deceased). Other survivors: children Virginia, Pauline Diggins, James, Richard, John, Kenneth, Arthur; 10 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 13 at Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Ediger, Mildred, 75, Inman, Kan., died April 16. Parents: Jacob and Maria Regier Ediger (deceased). Funeral: April 19 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman.

Hamman Raymond, 77, Bluffton, Ohio, died April 11. Spouse: Irene Hamman. Parents: Raymond and Ruth Ritter Hamman (deceased). Other survivors: children Raymond, Timothy, William, Beth Thompson, Laurie Blackburn, Ruth Provost, Jill Caskie; 19 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 15 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Jantzen, Gertrude Claassen, 85, Beatrice, Neb., died April 10. Spouse: Frank Jantzen (deceased). Parents: John and Christine Enns Claassen (deceased). Survivors: children Gordon, John; one grandchild. Funeral: April 14 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Lengacher, Doris Jean Meinerding, 66, Leo, Ind., died April 16 of cancer. Spouse: Joe Lengacher. Parents: Ray and Mary Meinerding (deceased). Other survivors: children Mike, Jeff, Pam Miller, Tim; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 20 at North Leo Mennonite Church.

Mottice, Martha Linder, 45, Louisville, Ohio, died April 13 of cardiac arrest. Spouse: Frederick Mottice. Parents: Ervin and Delphia Nussbaum Linder (deceased). Other survivors: children Brandon, Matthew, Jarrod. Funeral: April 17 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Moyer, Susie Anders, 94, Souderton, Pa., died April 11. Spouse: Vincent Moyer (deceased). Parents: Jeremiah and Fannie Fretz Anders (deceased). Survivors: children Dorothy Martin, Shirley Godshall, Vincent; five grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 15 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Schrock, Eli, 89, Sarasota, Fla., died March 23 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Mary Hershberger Schrock (deceased). Survivors: children Betty Davis, Esther Graber, Henry, Paul, Abe, Richard; 16 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 27 at Bayshore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Schrock, Leroy, 82, Glen Flora, Wis., died April 6. Spouse: Esther Weaver Schrock. Parents: Sam and Katie Miller Schrock (deceased). Other survivors: children Elwood, Arland, Betty Wilkens, Rita Stoll; 12 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 9 at South Lawrence Mennonite Church, Glen Flora.

Yoder, Lucille Marie Schultz, 76, Hutchinson, Kan., died April 4 of cancer. Spouse: Richard Yoder. Parents: Henry and Elise Schultz (deceased). Other survivors: children Patrick, Dixie Wedel, Tim; seven grandchildren. Funeral: April 7 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

Widrick, Aaron, 95, Lowville, N.Y., died April 12. Parents: John and Veronica Erb Widrick (deceased). Survivors: children Aaron, Loren; eight grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; one great-great grandchild. Funeral: April 14 at Croghan (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

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- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has fall openings for teaching positions in ***middle school science/math, kindergarten*** and ***1st grade***. Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **Warwick River Christian School** is adding classes in 2000-01. Mennonite certified teachers are needed for ***grades 6,4,3,1 and K-5***. Contact Principal Glenda Mosemann, 252 Lucas Creek Road, Newport News, VA 23602; 757-877-2941; fax 757-877-6510; email wrcschool@livenet.net

- **First Mennonite Church**, Berne, Ind., seeks a ***director of Christian education***. The position will be full-time. Send resume by May 15, 2000. To inquire further for job description, contact First Mennonite Church, Box 111, Berne, IN 46711; 219-589-3108; email craig@firstmennonite.org

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- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 345) invites applications for the following teaching positions for 2000-01: ***7th and 8th grade social studies*** (full-time), ***high school English*** (full-time) and ***German*** (60-75%). Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email dueckak@hotmail.com

- **Eastern Mennonite High School**, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, has the following positions for the 2000-2001 school year: ***physical, health and driver education*** (full-time), ***instrumental music*** (70 percent), ***social sciences*** (20 percent) sociology and psychology.

  Fax resumes to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528; or call 540-432-4502.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a candidate for the position of full-time ***youth pastor***. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. Located in southeastern Pa., Franconia has an exciting and growing jr. and sr. high youth program.

  Interested people should send resume to Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email info@franconiamennonite.org

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  Contact Tom Burnett, Administrator, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705; email tburnett@ptd.net

- **West Fallowfield Christian School** is accepting applications for ***director of development*** to establish and manage the development program for building the school's planned giving. Candidates will have experience in philanthropic development for a Christian organization, possess administrative skills, and have strong communication and relationship building skills. WFCS is a K-8 Mennonite elementary-middle school founded in 1941. Contact Development Committee Chair, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; email glenny@epix.net

- **Service Adventure**, an inter-Mennonite 10 ½-month service-learning program for young adults ages 17-20, needs qualified ***leaders*** to mentor participants. Leadership experience, interest in young adults, spiritual discernment and conflict resolution skills are desired. Two-year term. Minimum age 24. Accepting applications now for terms beginning fall 2000. Openings include: Champaign, Ill.; Johnstown, Pa.; Lethbridge, Alta.; Philippi, W.V.; and Anchorage, Alaska.

  Information: Kent Dutchersmith, Mennonite Board of Missions, 219-294-7523; email KentTD@mbm.org

- **Seeds of Hope, Inc.**, an established Christian community development organization located in Casa Grande, Ariz., is seeking an ***executive director***. This position requires the operation and management of a non-profit corporation whose mission is to maintain and develop relationships between the Christian community and the disadvantaged. The executive director oversees existing programs and staff, as well as new program development. Competitive salary and benefits package.

  For a copy of the job description and an application, contact Seeds of Hope at 520-836-6335, or email seedhope@casagrande.com. Applications and resumes must be received by May 31, 2000.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** announces two ***business faculty*** positions. Ph.D. or DBA in ***information systems*** or related field. Background in decision sciences and quantitative methods also helpful. Teaching and industry experience preferred. Ph.D. or DBA in ***marketing*** or related field. Teaching and industry experience preferred. EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Herbert Swartz, Interim VP and Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email dean@emu.edu. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary** is seeking a ***librarian*** to catalog materials, manage periodical subscriptions and provide interlibrary loan services. Must have master's degree in library or information science and have experience cataloging with AACR2, MARC format, OCLC and LCSH.

  Send letter of application, resume and three references to Library Director, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; or by email to esaner@ambs.edu. Review will begin immediately. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer.

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by Gordon Houser

We depend on the news media for an understanding of what's going on in our world. But we must think critically about what we read or watch and realize how distorted and incomplete information may be.

In *What Uncle Sam Really Wants* (Odonian Press, 1992), media critic and scholar Noam Chomsky writes that "the major media are large corporations, owned by and interlinked with even larger conglomerates."

In his *The Media Monopoly* (Beacon Press, 1990), Ben H. Bagdidian writes that at the end of World War II, "80 percent of the daily newspapers in the United States were independently owned, but by 1989 the proportion was reversed." In 1981, he adds, "20 corporations controlled most of the business of the country's 11,000 magazines, but only seven years later that number had shrunk to three corporations."

With some of the major mergers in the last few years, this disparity is even greater. These media corporations sell audiences to advertisers. Thus, Chomsky writes, "the picture of the world presented [in the major media] reflects the narrow and biased interests and values of the sellers, the buyers and the product."

James M. Wall offers an example of this in *The Christian Century* (April 12). He writes about the death of Halima Al-Aloul, mother of 12, the youngest of whom is 2, who was killed near the Palestinian city of Hebron by Israeli soldiers. She was traveling home with her husband to her village after visiting their daughter. Earlier in the evening three Israeli settlers had been shot while driving on a road between two villages. Though no one was killed, the incident prompted the army to set up a temporary roadblock. When Mrs. Al-Aloul's husband realized he was traveling without his car insurance document, he turned around and tried to drive away from the roadblock. Israeli soldiers "fired at least 20 rounds at the car, without any warning to stop," according to Al-Haq, a Palestinian legal group. Mrs. Al-Aloul was killed.

Jo B. Robertson, Bread for the World

The Israeli military's version of the story was that "the soldiers opened fire after the vehicle's driver tried to run over one of the soldiers at the checkpoint." But a reporter for the London-based newspaper the *Independent* looked at the car, which had "two bullet holes in the front and at least a dozen in the rear. The back window was entirely smashed. … The front window was intact."

American media that even reported the incident placed it in the context of Israeli security concerns, showing their bias toward the Israeli government.

Fortunately Mennonites have workers on the ground in many places around the world and have access to a more complete report of incidents like these.

People like Mrs. Al-Aloul have little voice in the powerful media that too many of us depend on exclusively for our news.

Another group with little voice in the media are the people in the United States who suffer from hunger, like the girl in the photo at left. According to David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, "In the United States—in the midst of an economic boom—31 million people live in families that can't always afford the food they need."

As part of Bread for the World's Offering of Letters campaign, "A Fair Share: Working to End Hunger," thousands of people of faith will urge Congress to support the Hunger Relief Act. The legislation would reduce hunger by extending food stamps to more low-income working people and their families. It would also increase funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program, which provides commodities to local food banks and other emergency food providers.

For more information about "A Fair Share," visit www.bread.org; write Bread for the World, 1100 Wayne Ave., Suite 1000, Silver Spring, MD 20910; call 800-82-BREAD or email <offering.of.letters@bread.org>.

books

The Human Condition: Contemplation and Transformation by Thomas Keating (Paulist Press, 1999, $5.95) presents the Harold M. Wit Lectures at Harvard University on Living a Spiritual Life in the Contemporary Age. This 45-page book is full of wisdom. Keating concludes: "If we have not experienced ourselves as unconditional love, we have more work to do, because that is who we really are."

films

Erin Brockovich (R) tells the true story of an unconventional justice worker. A single mom working for a law firm uncovers a large corporation poisoning nearby residents. Her efforts lead to the largest civil settlement in U.S. history. Julia Roberts plays the character a bit over the top, but it's her best performance. And the other characters are well-drawn, mixtures of good and bad.

videos

For a critical view of the Persian Gulf War, check out *Three Kings* (R). After the cease-fire, four U.S. soldiers try to take millions of dollars of Kuwaiti gold stolen by Iraq. They face a moral dilemma when they encounter Iraqis opposed to Saddam Hussein being held hostage by Iraqi soldiers. This video makes a powerful antiwar statement and shows in particular how stupid the Gulf War was.

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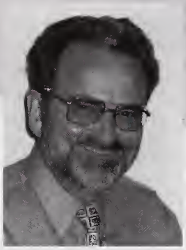

J. Lorne Peachey

Jesus as he is, not as we want him to be

Heard the one about Jesus and the sparrows? Seems that when he was 5 years old, Jesus was playing by the brook one day and decided to sculpt 12 sparrows out of the clay he found on the bank. Trouble is, it was the Sabbath, and a group of passing elders was horrified that Jesus was desecrating God's holy day. They said so to Joseph, who reprimanded his son. Jesus responded by clapping his hands and shouting "go," whereupon "the sparrows took flight and went away chirping," amazing the whole community.

That's not a story you read in any of the four Gospels of the New Testament. You would if the Gospel of Thomas had made it into the canon. But early church leaders decided Thomas' writings should not be part of what has become our Bible. We can only guess why. I wonder if it might be because Thomas was depicting Jesus more as he wanted him to be—a miracle-worker even at age 5—than as he really was.

Thomas surely has company today. As I listen to discussions about Jesus and how he serves as a model for our lives as Christians, I'm struck by how often the Jesus that emerges so closely parallels the lives of the people doing the talking.

To follow Jesus' example is to reach out to those less fortunate than we. It is also to challenge those who build structures and maintain boundaries that oppress and degrade.

If, for example, we think that Christians should be activists against evil in our world, we emphasize those Gospel stories about Jesus that show him righting wrongs: cleansing the temple, condemning the Pharisees. If we are more inclined to seeing following Jesus as engaging in prayer and meditation, we talk about the Jesus who goes off into the mountains to commune with God. If for us the life of a Christian is helping others and easing their pain, our Jesus is the healer and the comforter.

It is not without reason that we can find a ready model in Jesus for whatever our inclination. The uniqueness of God's Son among us is that he is many things. The Jesus who casts out the moneychangers from the temple is also the one who goes out of his way to eat with tax collectors. The one who condemns the Pharisees for their sins also tells the woman caught in adultery she is not condemned. The Jesus who refuses to tell the high priest whether he is the son of God has his disciples proclaiming that fact to the crowds around them.

How do we follow this Jesus? Which parts of his life serve as a model of how we should live as children of God? How do we make our choices without simply mirroring who we are or want to be?

In my reading of the Gospels, I find one consistency in Jesus' behavior, no matter who he is with, what he is doing or what part of his personality seems to have most prominence at the moment. Jesus always comes out on the side of the oppressed, the poor and the powerless. Whether he is being an activist, a theologian or a healer, Jesus stands firmly on the side of those to whom life has not been kind. He also has his harshest words for those who wield the power, authority and structures that oppress and contribute to this unkindness.

The examples from the Gospels that made it into the canon are myriad: the widow who puts two cents into the treasury; the Lazarus who died at the rich man's table; the woman with the hemorrhage; the sick man let down through the roof; the publican who prayed as a sinner; Zacchaeus, who climbed into a tree. Some of the most tender moments in Jesus' life come in the stories we have of his contacts with those who are outcasts and sinners. By sharp contrast are the scenes with the rich and powerful. We see a much more forceful and judgmental side of Jesus when dealing with these.

Jesse Jackson put it this way when he addressed the Religious Communication Congress 2000 this past March. Followers of Jesus "define themselves by how we treat the least of these," he said.

Anabaptist-Mennonite theology holds closely to the need to follow Jesus as a model in every area of life. We have a long road to travel before we agree on what that means. But no matter what our inclination, one thing we should confess. To follow Jesus consistently is to reach out to those less fortunate than we. It is also to challenge those who build structures and maintain boundaries that oppress and degrade.

Then we are following Jesus as he really is. Not just as we want him to be.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

May 16, 2000

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let's get together

foundations for a uniting church

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10 Catholics hungry for peace in Hungary
16 Is GC-MC merger the will of God?

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

At the end of our rope

I read the Kurt Horst fable (Readers Say, April 25), and it seems to me that at least two points are immediately clear: First, Horst can build a great story and capture the essence of the problem so that there is no confusion as to the question. Second and more important, we are left with no solution. Worse, we are left as dangling as the two men in the fable who are tied together but separated by a length of rope, a bridge and vastly different points of view. How do these guys ever pull themselves up? In point of fact, they cannot. There needs to be a third party to help. That third party will have to demand cooperation. There can be no lengthy dialogue on the merits of either position, or they will hang over the side of the bridge forever.

Who's in charge? Is it the conference, the denomination or, as the story suggests, no one? There are only two solutions that I see. Cut the rope or resolve the conflict so that both survive. In my 10-year experience as a Mennonite, I have witnessed little conflict resolution and little rope cutting. Mostly I have just seen people left dangling. I would hope this real world story has a more positive ending—and beginning. *—Don Hall, Johnstown, Pa.*

Finding the way

Thank you, Richard Kauffman, for the (dare I say Spirit-inspired?) call for a third way ("A Third Way Between Fight and Flight," May 2). The four suggestions provide an excellent start. I will be praying we have the will, courage and commitment to find this third way together. Not in our human way but in God's way.*—John A. Landis, Sellersville, Pa.*

Clear position

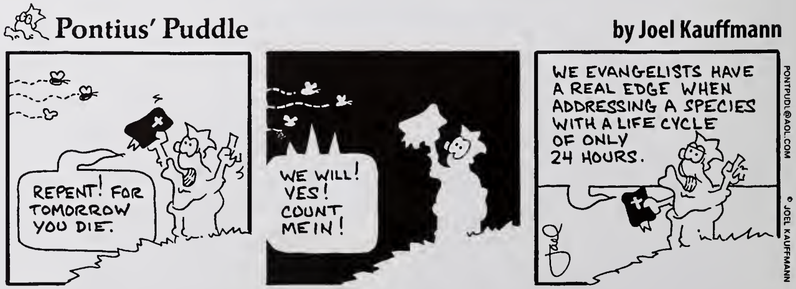
The elders of St. John Mennonite Church of Pandora, Ohio, wish to communicate our concern regarding the matter of homosexuality. Our purpose is not to review the conversation and vote that took place at St. Louis 99. Though there have been a host of reasons presented for the outcome, it clearly indicates division and/or confusion regarding homosexuality. We find it deeply troubling that this group of representatives was unable to affirm the clear teachings of Scripture and the historically orthodox position regarding human sexuality, not to mention our own confession of faith.

We want to be clear that our position as leaders of this congregation is that God intends marriage to be a covenant between one man and one woman for life (Mark 10:9; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11). Christian marriage is a mutual relationship in Christ (Ephesians 5:22-33), a covenant made between two believers (2 Corinthians 6:14). God's Word affirms that homosexuality is sin (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Therefore, we affirm and support the resolutions on human sexuality adopted by the General Conference Mennonite Church in 1986 and by the Mennonite Church in 1987. We also affirm and support the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, Article 19. *—Elders Bradlee Bame, Dean Biery, Rennie Burrus, Lee Grismore, Randy Keeler, Stan Newton, Jack Ridge, Lynn Thompson, St. John Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio*

The care and feeding of justice

We didn't see the March 28 issue until a week ago as we work in rural Honduras with Mennonite Central Committee. Hopefully it is not too late to comment on John Zimmerman's article "The Peaceable Kingdom at Hand." We ate as vegetarians while in the United States, though now we eat what we are offered for cultural reasons. But our reasons for eating little or no meat are different from Zimmerman's. For us, it is a question of social justice and ecological stewardship. Consider the following:


Pontius' Puddle
by Joel Kauffmann
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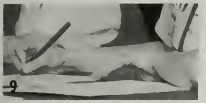
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Cover photo by Marilyn Nolt

y readers say

• We live in a world where perhaps as many as 1 billion people do not have adequate food.

• Some 70 percent of corn and soybean production in the United States is fed to animals to produce meat, eggs and milk.

• Many of these crops are produced in ways destructive to God's creation, using large quantities of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers and polluting air and water.

• Eight-five percent or more of the energy value of grains is lost converting them to meat. It takes at least 100 pounds of grain to produce 15 pounds of meat. (This is a rough estimate; chickens and fish are more efficient, beef cattle less.)

• The food system in the United States is highly dependent on nonrenewable fossil fuels for traction, chemical production and transport. A study by David Pimentel of Cornell University reports 10 calories of fossil fuel energy are used to create 1 calorie of food energy. For those who eat a no-meat diet, the ratio is approximately 6 to 1, and those who exclude eggs and milk drop the ratio to 3 to 1.

Several times a week we drive through a broad, fertile valley, almost all of which is held by a few large landowners who are using it mostly to produce beef for export. Meanwhile, the steep, stony hillsides surrounding the valley are filled with poor farmers who are trying to raise enough corn and beans to support their families, losing topsoil every year to erosion. A few are even trying to eke out a living in the few meters between the highway and the pasture fences. The beef industry has also been responsible for a staggering amount of deforestation in this country. While many insist that our choosing to not eat meat won't change this, there is something fundamentaly evil about a system that gives better land to cattle than to people.—*Eric and Andrea Nord, La Libertad, Honduras*

Regaining the initiative

Foundations for a uniting church

by Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp

The two of us, one from the General Conference Mennonite Church and one from the Mennonite Church, are grateful for the prospect of uniting our two church bodies. Both of us have long been involved in inter-Mennonite organizations and programs. We joyfully testify to our experience of the essential oneness in Christ of the GC and MC. We believe their pending merger to be the next step in our mutual obedience and faithfulness to our Lord's prayer and expectation "that they may be one even as we are one" (John 17:11b).

Unity is an essential mark of the church. We are concerned by what appears to be apathy and a sense of noninvolvement in the unity process among many congregations in both bodies. We are saddened that some leaders do not find compelling the divine call to unity. We cannot accept the assessment of some critics that more will be lost than gained in this development. We have felt apprehensive in what appears to be a process that is more leadership-driven than people-driven. We long for holy passion that exclaims, "Ebenezer, hitherto hath the Lord led us" (1 Samuel 7:12). We offer these reflections with our hope and prayer that they may help both supporters and doubters see this great task as opportunity. We want to encourage a fresh start, a second wind, a regaining of the initiative. We must remind ourselves again of the foundations of a uniting church.

If we are to regain the initiative, we need to see the integration of GCs and MCs, although small, as a significant step in the unfolding divine vision for the church and humankind.

A divine gift: The call to unity reminds us that unity and community are a divine gift. We have long experienced these gifts in our own congregations and conferences and, most impressively, in work and fellowship together across MC-GC boundaries. We are also grateful for our kinship with churches in other lands, especially through Mennonite World Conference. With unity as a gift of God, we believe this can be fully realized only after much prayer, worshiping together, seeking out and sustaining loyal friendships. Unity comes as much from patient waiting on the Lord as from meticulous negotiation of church boards. We recall the words of the Catholic theologian Yves Congar, who said that change in the church not only takes time but also requires "a certain humility and pliancy of spirit, the awareness of imperfections."

If we are to regain the initiative, we need to discover anew that transformation (what was called integration) is a gift of God.

A priority from the Lord: If unity is a divine call to the people of God, then the uniting of the faithful has to be a priority from the Lord. "As we are one" is a living demonstration of a community of the triune God where differences in role and function are integrated into a single character and purpose. The apostle Paul speaks of "we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another" (Romans 12:5). When Jesus prayed "that they may all be one," he declared three times that unity is an ingredient of Christian witness, "so that the world may believe that you have sent me" (John 17:18,21,23). Jesus was sent. The living body of Christ is a sent people. Our evangelical witness will be more authentic and faithful if we embody the unity of the triune God. In a time when the discipleship churches in the United States may feel beleaguered by secular consumerism and politicized religiosity, the uniting of churches will surely strengthen a common witness. The united and reconciled people of God are a living demonstration of the conviction of "one new humanity in place of the two … reconciling both groups to God in one body through the Cross" (Ephesians 2:15-16).

If we are to regain the initiative, we need to see the transformation of GCs and MCs,

If we are to regain the initiative, we as individuals, congregations and conferences must humbly confess our weaknesses, failures, impatience, ignorance, arrogance, self-satisfaction, self-righteousness, prejudices and indifference to the divine call to unity. Renewal and new life in the church will be rooted in confession and repentance.

although small, as a significant step in the unfolding divine vision for the church and humankind.

Confession and repentance: If unity is an essential mark of the church, any sign of disunity must call forth confession and repentance. Our separation suggests that both church bodies have not been living up to the divine intent. This calls for confession and repentance. But we have been more than separated. Some congregations and conferences have suffered formal divisions. This calls for confession and repentance. We have sometimes ignored and viewed the other group condescendingly. Without knowing the other's story, we have critiqued each other's church order and behavior—sometimes for our own egos, our own satisfactions. This calls for confession and repentance. We have been competitive, possessive of our own turf, and partial to our own people, thus staining our witness to the Divine Spirit. This, too, calls for confession and repentance.

If we are to regain the initiative, we as individuals, congregations and conferences must humbly confess our weaknesses, failures, impatience, ignorance, arrogance, self-satisfaction, self-righteousness, prejudices and indifference to the divine call to unity. Renewal and new life in the church will be rooted in confession and repentance.

Celebrate histories and cultures: Bringing together our two church bodies should also be a time to celebrate the rich and sustaining histories and several cultures. In an article in *The Mennonite* (Sept. 14, 1999), we addressed the gifts the GC and the MC bring to each other. Our histories and cultures flow deep. Our spiritual styles date to 16th-century Switzerland and the Netherlands. An intriguing variety of cultural and linguistic streams—Swiss, Dutch, German, Eastern European—flow to us out of our past. In recent generations into our people have flowed refreshing streams from Native Americans, African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians in North America and people in other continents.

If we are to regain the initiative, each group should plan deliberately to learn to know the history and people of the other. We can both celebrate and critique each other's past. Our sometimes partisan and parochial memories can become transformed into a greater, uniting story. Newness and wholeness come when we recognize the significance of the past for the church of tomorrow.

Basis of our faith: We see opportunity in this process of transformation to ask ourselves again what is the basis of our faith, what is the unity for which we yearn. The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective should become an energizing document in every congregation. MC and GC congregations should be encouraged to study this confession to discover anew our mutually held faith perspectives. Unity must be owned at a congregational level. Without such congregationally nurtured commitment to unity, wider unity will be formal and hierarchical. Yet we must acknowledge with Jonathan Larson, a district minister in the Southeast Conference (MC), that "the unity we ache for will grow not out of full doctrinal agreement but out of a common witness of shared mission and service" (*Proclamation*,

Impasse and resolution:
A story out of the Mennonite past

In 1955-56, the boards of Goshen College Biblical Seminary (MC) and Mennonite Biblical Seminary (GC) were negotiating an affiliation of the two schools. An impasse loomed on location. Positions hardened. Carefully negotiated plans were on the verge of collapse.

In April 1956, Erland Waltner, representing MBS, wrote to Harold Bender (GCBS) expressing his pain and sorrow: "To me the breakdown of these discussions without a solution would be a real tragedy. It would be more than the failure of a proposal. It would be a failure on the part of those of us who are one in Christ and who have many bonds of history and experience uniting us. This bothers me immensely, especially because to us is given in a special sense a ministry of reconciliation. Yet while I feel this deeply, I must also confess that I am quite at a loss to know what more we can do. Perhaps even this experience of coming to the end of our resources is of God so that He may lead us."

In April 1956, Waltner prepared a "Statement of Mutuality," which elevated the discussion to a higher level of spiritual sensitivity. Sharing this statement with Harold Bender, he concluded with these words: "Mutuality is of the very essence of 'koinonia.' It is an expression of Christian love. It is a divine gift through the Spirit. It is the atmosphere in which those who are externally 'different and unequal' actually experience their overwhelming oneness in Jesus Christ and resolve their practical problems in the abiding presence of their common Lord."

Harold Bender responded to Waltner's statement on mutuality thus: "I was much moved by your letter, which finds an almost complete echo in my own heart. I know of no way but to cast our burden upon the Lord and watch and pray. I am beginning to understand what some people mean when they speak of a heartbreak."

Forty-four years ago two brothers confessed to each other their anguish of spirit and their transcending commitment to unity in the body of Christ and trust in the leading of God. Does not this testimony from the past speak to our condition today?—*Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp*

Regaining the initiative

continued from page 7

Jan.-Feb. 2000). We believe the coming together of our church bodies will draw forth new spiritual energy and deeper insight for dealing with the troubling issues both have been facing as we enter a new century.

There will be no unity that does not recognize differences. The church is an amazing body that embraces a wide range of personality types, differing family structures, gender experiences, generational perspectives, cultural outlooks, political viewpoints, ethnic traditions, memories, patterns of worship, understandings of Scripture. We suspect that differences within each of our congregations and church bodies are as great as those between them. In spite of sharp distinctions and longtime separations, we behold a miracle of grace that transforms and transcends these, "for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28).

Larson also writes: "I am persuaded that God is calling us as churches and as a conference to be less keen about finding boundaries than in joyfully crossing them, be less absorbed with the subpoints of law and more amazed by grace, be less full of dogmatics and more brimming with life, be less worried about the world's influence on the church and more eager for the church to make inroads on the world."

If we are to regain the initiative, the transformation of the GC and the MC needs to be a compelling interest for every congregation. Such unity will be based on our shared confession of faith. It will nurture love and fellowship that accept differences rather than insist on uniformity.

Conclusion: We doubt there is a right model or even a right process for transforming our two church bodies. We are sure that no organizational model and no process will succeed unless unity is accepted as a gracious gift of God, unless unity becomes a sign of the "sentness" of the church, unless the process of unity includes confession and repentance for mistaken patterns and practices, unless unity is built on understanding and appreciating our separate stories, unless unity is cultivated and practiced in both local congregation and global church.

Unity is an imperative, not only for the GC and the MC but for all Mennonites, indeed for all Christians. The gospel imperative calls us to be ready to take risks for unity as well as to be patient and prudent in developing particular patterns of action.

Both retired church leaders, Robert S. Kreider lives in North Newton, Kan., and John A. Lapp in Akron, Pa.

The transformation of the MC and the GC needs to be a compelling interest for every congregation. Such unity will be based on our shared confession of faith. It will nurture love and fellowship that accept differences rather than insist on uniformity.

An integrate
marriage

She's GC; he's MC; but they get along.

by Gordon Houser

When Jama Brookmyer and Shane Graber were married in 1995, neither thought their different church experiences would matter much. Since then, they have come to realize that belonging to the same denomination does not necessarily mean they will agree on worship styles or ways of practicing their faith.

While the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) work toward becoming one church body, Jama and Shane are living in what they call an integrated marriage.

Jama grew up in Goshen, Ind., and attended Eighth Street Mennonite Church, a GC congregation. Shane grew up attending Lockport Mennonite Church (MC) in Stryker, Ohio. Jama was used to singing hymns predominantly, while Shane sang more gospel songs. Eighth Street used a greater variety of instruments to accompany singing, such as flute, violin or guitar, while Lockport often sang a cappella or with accompaniment by piano and sometimes organ. The former used dramas and special readings, while the latter stuck to basic preaching, with occasional dramas.

The couple now attends Central Mennonite Church in Archbold, Ohio, which has, Jama says, "a perfect mix of both styles of worship." Shane agrees: "It's a good match for both of us."

Jama remembers having a female associate pastor in her congregation in 1986, when she was 14. Shane says his congregation never even considered having a woman in leadership while he grew up. Jama says Shane felt reluctant to be married by a woman pastor at first, but he became more comfortable with the idea over time.

The two met as students at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Jama says they talked about their different viewpoints as a GC and an MC, but they felt these didn't get in the way of their relationship. Friends joked with them about relating across denominational lines. "Some even called me half-breed," Jama says, because she is a product of a Mennonite and Baptist marriage. Shane, on the other hand, was considered a "full breed" since both his parents are MC.

A living microcosm: Jama Brookmyer Graber and Shane Graber have been married since 1995.

Shane claims that any conflicts they've had over the GC and MC differences have been minor. "I came from a fairly conservative church and Jama from a more liberal church," he says, "but I feel that college mellowed us both out in the end to the point at which we can see each other's viewpoints."

One issue that came up when they first married was Jama's decision to use her family's name of Brookmyer with Graber. It has taken Shane time to accept this. "I am just now able to correct people when they incorrectly address Jama in public," he says. Still, he sees this as more of a generational difference than an MC-GC difference.

Another issue that has brought discussion is inclusive language. Since they have moved to Archbold and begun attending an MC congregation, Jama has had trouble hearing what she calls "noninclusive language." Shane, on the other hand, feels "this subject is overrated and overemphasized" in both GC and MC groups. "I do not feel we have the right to change an author's wording—even if it is just changing the gender in certain instances," he says.

Jama points to other differences they've discussed. One is the authority given to congregations or conferences about certain issues. Jama is used to giving more weight to decisions made by congregations, while Shane is accustomed to area conferences having more decision-making power.

Another difference relates to how people deal with conflict. Jama says, "In my experiences, I have noticed that GCs like to talk things out in great length and depth, while MCs prefer to approach issues cautiously, maybe even hesitantly." In discussing their marriage, Jama tends to speak more forthrightly about their differences, while Shane will play down whatever conflict there may be, calling it minor.

Nevertheless, both are committed to their marriage and to working out whatever differences they encounter. And both realize that a further test will come as they have children. Jama says, "One of our standard jokes is that our future children will be GC and MC hybrids."

Yet at this point they don't really know how their children will integrate Jama and Shane's convictions, which remain fairly strong. Neither of them, Jama says, wants to lose their distinctives and are therefore unsure about the transformation of the two denominations into one.

Jama is opposed to the transformation because she is afraid of losing her GC roots and identity to the "Mennonite melting pot." Shane is more open to the idea, since he feels that disagreements of the generations past need to be put behind us.

Although they oppose transformation, they represent a living microcosm of it. And in spite of their differences, they are strongly committed to their marriage. Shane says, "We may not agree with one another, but we can see each other's point of view." That describes many healthy marriages, as well as many healthy churches.

Gordon Houser is features editor for theMennonite.

Jama and Shane don't really know how their children will integrate their convictions, which remain fairly strong. Neither of them wants to lose their differences and are therefore unsure about the transformation of the two denominations into one.

CPT delegation joins Vieques protest

Eight members among those removed from island

VIEQUES, Puerto Rico—Eight Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) members were among the estimated 150 to 200 protesters removed from Vieques by federal agents on May 4. The protesters were not charged with any crime and later returned to the island.

The nine members of CPT's emergency delegation arrived on Vieques, located off eastern Puerto Rico, May 1 and 2 to lend support to demonstrators opposing U.S. Navy bombing exercises on the island. Eight CPT members risked arrest by joining one of 15 camps scattered across the bombing range.

To avoid the potential of arrest and serve as a contact person, the ninth CPT member remained with another group of protesters at the bombing range's main gate.

"We are committed to continue supporting the nonviolent encampments and the 9,300 people of Viequez as they struggle to deal with the environmental, health and economic disasters created by the Navy presence, in particular their use of heavy metal and depleted uranium," delegate member Clif Kindy said in a statement the day before being evicted from the island.

The eight CPT members, part of an ecumenical camp, were removed by federal agents at about 7 a.m., following breakfast and prayers, says CPT spokesperson Kryss Chupp from the organization's Chicago headquarters. The protesters were taken off Vieques to Roosevelt Roads Naval Base on Puerto Rico's main island. Chupp says the CPT members, who never had to give their names, were released in the afternoon and took a ferry back to Vieques where they are "kind of hanging out with folks to see what the next steps are."

Authorities warned that demonstrators could face arrest if they returned to the bombing range. Chupp says she doesn't know if any CPT members went back to the range. Several CPT members are participating in a fast.

Chupp says she received one report that Puerto Rican police were weeping as the demonstrators were taken away. "I took that as a sign of the widespread support of Puerto Ricans for the protesters," she says.

Protesters had been encamped on the bombing range for more than a year following the death of a civilian security guard when two bombs landed off-target. Other supporters of the protests include the Roman Catholic Church in Puerto Rico, World Council of Churches and Pastors for Peace.

CPT has tentatively scheduled a peacemaker delegation to Vieques in late July.—*Rich Preheim*

Pastoral first for Trinidad church

For the first time in the history of the Trinidad Mennonite Church, the pastors of each of the conference's three congregations are natives of the Caribbean island.

Ganese Gunpath and Ganesh Kalloo were ordained earlier this year for pastoral ministry. Gunpath pastors Charlieville Mennonite Church, and Kalloo pastors Diego Martin Mennonite Church.

Trinidad Mennonite Church, which has about 160 members, was born out of Mennonite broadcasting and medical work starting in 1969.—*Connections*

Letter to Clinton: Stop nuclear weapons

ELKHART, Ind.—Representatives of Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Central Committee were among the signatories of an April 18 letter from religious leaders urging President Clinton to renew his support for halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

George B. Stoltzfus, general secretary of Mennonite Church USA, expressed his support for efforts within the religious community to prod the government toward taking a more aggressive role in arms control discussions and disarmament negotiations.

"As a people of peace, Mennonites in the United States should support efforts that will help us toward our goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons," Stoltzfus says.

The letter urged Clinton and U.S. political leaders to reduce the country's nuclear arsenal immediately and unilaterally; stop production of the Trident D-5 ballistic missile; act quickly to remove U.S., Russian and Chinese nuclear weapons from "launch on warning" status; initiate negotiations for further reductions in U.S. and Russian arsenals; initiate negotiations with all nuclear powers to abolish and prohibit nuclear weapons.

"Without bold actions such as these," the letter says, "nuclear proliferation will likely accelerate, with potentially devastating results for all of humankind."

The letter also requests a meeting with Clinton to discuss how the signers can support his efforts to advance these and related initiatives. The religious leaders maintain that the U.S. government has demonstrated no willingness to reduce its nuclear arsenal.

Colorado community honors Mennonites for healing body, soul

LA JUNTA, Colo.—Starting with a tuberculosis sanitarium nearly a century ago, Mennonites have provided healing and hope to the people in the Arkansas Valley region of southeastern Colorado. The community honored those efforts with a "Mennonite Appreciation Day" on April 8.

The day featured the unveiling of "Body and Soul," a bronze sculpture inside the main entrance to La Junta's Arkansas Valley Regional Medical Center, a former Mennonite Board of Missions hospital. Artist Jan Mapes dedicated her work to MBM and individual members of the Mennonite community, including health-care workers and MBM Voluntary Service participants. The sculpture depicts four figures: a child being treated by a nurse and held by its mother as she reads Scripture with a doctor.

"Healing is more than a physical presence. The healthy soul promotes the body to mend," said Mapes, of Sugar City, Colo. "Since the early 1900s, the presence of the Mennonite community has been significant in the Arkansas Valley. Their service in this area embodies the message of their sincere dedication to people through the diligent delivery of health care."

Mennonite health care in La Junta originated in 1904, when an Ohio woman made a $10,000 bequest to build a facility to treat tuberculosis patients. The Mennonite Sanitarium was dedicated Oct. 25, 1908. That led to the establishment of a nursing school, which graduated its first class in 1918.

Mennonite Hospital began Jan. 1, 1920, when MBM was granted control of the city hospital, thereby combining with the work of the sanitarium (which closed in 1956). A larger and better equipped hospital was built in 1927-28. Mennonite Hospital was renamed La Junta Medical Center in 1970, and the current name was adopted in the late 1980s. On July 1, 1998, MBM transferred its hospital funds and properties to a new, community-based, not-for-profit corporation.

Many MBM Voluntary Service workers, who served in the community between 1950 and 1982, gathered for a weekend reunion in conjunction with the event.—*MBM News Service*

MBM photo by: Joe Egli

This bronze sculpture, titled "Body and Soul" and created by Colorado artist Jan Mapes, was unveiled April 8 during "Mennonite Appreciation Day" in La Junta, Colo. Located in the local hospital, the sculpture features a child being treated by a nurse and held by its mother as she reads Scripture with a doctor.

Vada Snider

Pen power

Iris Overstreet (right) and Aldine Sprunger write letters for Bethel College's Amnesty International chapter on April 24 on the North Newton, Kan., campus. Overstreet, a Bethel junior from Lehigh, Kan., and Sprunger, a North Newton resident, were among more than 60 people who gathered for the four-hour letter-writing session.

Catholics hungry for peace in Hungary

Pacifist organization is MCC partner in Eastern Europe

AKRON, Pa.—North American Mennonites for centuries have held to the tenets of adult baptism and conscientious objection to military service. But for a Roman Catholic community in Hungary, these are new and exciting beliefs worth suffering for.

In 1945 in Hungary, a Catholic priest began a Christian pacifist movement known as Bokor, focusing on love of enemies and the poor. The movement, facing disapproval from Hungary's communist government, and later even from the Vatican, went underground. Today Bokor consists of some 200 groups throughout Hungary involved in community service and writing about nonviolence and peace. Bokor is one of Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) partners in peace work in the Balkans and other Eastern European countries.

Bokor leader Gyula Simonyi and his family recently visited North American Mennonite communities to share their story and to learn from Mennonite experiences.

Simonyi and his wife, Agnes, are parents of five children. According to their Catholic tradition, they had their first three children baptized as babies. But by the time the fourth and fifth children were born, the Simonyi family's reading of the Bible made them question the validity of infant baptism. Much to the dismay of their extended families, they did not have their last two children baptized.

Simonyi faced pressure from the government as well. From the end of the 1970s until 1989, some 30 Bokor members, including Simonyi, served jail time for refusing to participate in the military.

"Agnes and I asked each other, 'Is this really important?' " recalls Simonyi. "We prayed a lot." Finally in 1983, he sent his soldier ID back to the authorities. He was promptly arrested and sent to prison for 10 months—a shorter sentence than many since he had children.

"We celebrated my eighth birthday in prison," says daughter Katalin, now 24. "We took a cake and presents to the prison and had a party there."

She says she and her two younger siblings were "proud of our father but we couldn't tell anyone at school. We just counted the days until he could come home."

In 1990, as Hungary became more free, the country began offering alternatives to military service for conscientious objectors.

Today the entire Simonyi family works at home to write, translate, publish and distribute Christian literature. One son serves as webmaster for Bokor's web site. That's a far cry from the days when Bokor operated underground. Simonyi remembers how they painstakingly pecked out documents on an old typewriter, using 10 carbons to make duplicate copies. Despite these primitive methods, during the communist era Bokor illegally published more than 200 volumes of writings and translations.

Bokor members learned about Mennonites in the late 1970s through their discovery of *It Is Not Lawful for Me to Fight* by Jean Michel Hornus, which Simonyi translated into Hungarian. "Through our Roman Catholic education, we had learned about heretical sects in the Middle Ages but didn't know Mennonites by name," Simonyi says.

He says he met his "first living Mennonite" in 1992 at a conference in Sheffield, England. The Mennonite he met was Alan Kreider, a Mennonite Board of Missions worker in London. "We both stated that we had translated Hornus' book," Simonyi says.

Simonyi

Kreider had translated the book into English; Simonyi had translated Kreider's English-language version into Hungarian. Kreider advised Simonyi to ask Hansuli Gerber, MCC's Europe program director, for funds to help publish Simonyi's translation.

"I thought Hansuli must be very important, like the archbishop," Simonyi says with a chuckle.

More recently Simonyi discovered the MCC publication *Trek: Venture Into a World of Enough.* He decided to translate the reflection guide into Hungarian and Serbian. He believes the message of simple living is an especially timely one for Hungarians who are emerging from socialism and are lured by Western consumerism.

"Working for more will not satisfy us in the way we think," he says. "It is possible to work less, earn less and be happy."—*Pearl Sensenig of MCC News Service*

Nashville 2001
Colossians 3 12-17

Convention logo focuses on the cross

The newly chosen logo for the next General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church convention focuses on the cross and Christ's ability to bring his followers together.

The logo corresponds with Colossians 3:12-17, the text for Nashville 2001, which will be held July 2-7, 2001.

"The church includes imperfect people who are slowly being shaped by Christ into the community of faith," says the logo's designer, Ken Gingerich, graphic designer for Mennonite Board of Missions. "As we learn to yield to God's love and to one another, as we walk patiently together and forgive each other, Christ perfects us. Our unity in Christ draws others unto him. The broken pieces become as one in the light of the cross."

Bethel makes four-year graduation guarantee

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—An education at Bethel College now comes with a guarantee: If a student doesn't graduate within four years because a required course wasn't offered during that time, that course is free the next time it is offered.

To qualify for the four-year graduation guarantee, students must declare a major during their first year, take at least 31 hours per year and make progress toward meeting graduation requirements.

Over the past 10 years, 81 percent of Bethel students completed their degrees in four years or less. The national average for independent colleges and universities was 65 percent and 34 percent for four-year state schools.

"Published tuition rates [at other schools] don't tell the whole story," says Shirley King, Bethel's dean of enrollment services. "Students may find certain required classes full so that they don't finish their degrees in four years. That costs more in added tuition as well as loss of income."

MBCM appoints interim president

ELKHART, Ind.—Longtime pastor James Waltner of Goshen, Ind., has been named interim president of Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM), starting in October. He will succeed Everett Thomas, who is leaving the position in November to become editor of *The Mennonite.*

Waltner will oversee the termination of MBCM as part of the transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church into a new denomination.

Waltner served nearly 40 years as pastor of congregations in Kansas, California, Illinois and Indiana. He retired in 1996 after 10 years at College Mennonite Church in Goshen. He has served on the General Conference Mennonite Church General Board and Mennonite Biblical Seminary board and was chair of the Membership Committee for the new Mennonite Church. He recently concluded a four-month stint as MBCM's interim director of ministerial leadership.—*MBCM News Service*

EMU names new undergraduate dean

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University administrator Marie S. Morris has been named undergraduate academic dean for the Harrisonburg school. Currently associate dean in EMU's academic affairs division, she will begin her new job on July 1.

Morris will manage the academic program of the undergraduate division, including faculty matters, curriculum and related academic programs. She will also oversee the admissions committee, student advising and academic strategic planning.

Morris joined the EMU nursing faculty in 1984 and served for 14 years before moving into administration. She holds degrees from Hesston (Kan.) College, EMU, University of Virginia and George Mason University.

MCC recognizes Bangladeshi staff members

DHAKA, Bangladesh—Five Bangladeshis were honored last month by Mennonite Central Committee for 25 years or more of service with MCC in the country. Nurul Islam Howlader has served as driver; Derek D'Silva is head of MCC's agricultural program; Joshna Rozario is an administrative assistant; Shirajuddowla is program officer for the Farm Family Development Program; and agriculture program extensionist Abul Khayer retired the end of last December with the closing of MCC's soybean program.

The honorees each received a set of traditional clothing—a sari for the women and a punjabi for the men—and an MCC watch.

MCC arrived in Bangladesh in 1970 to provide relief after a major cyclone. Over the next few years, the program changed to development work. Gradually more employees were hired to manage the agricultural, job creation and social service programs.—*MCC News Service*

by the way ...

Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberto Menchu of Guatemala credits Mennonite Central Committee workers in that country with providing her lifesaving shelter 19 years ago during Gautemala's civil war.—*Los Angeles Times*

LAURELVILLE MENNONITE CHURCH CENTER

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Laurelville Mennonite Church Center.
Cost: $165/person. Call Laurelville at 1-800-839-1021 for more information, or email info@laurelville.org.

Workers

Buckwalter, Marian, Lancaster, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Akron, Pa., as an administrative assistant.

Manickam, Joe, Pasadena, Calif., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Pasadena as a local service worker.

Moyer, Krista, Telford, Pa., is beginning a three-year assignment with MCC in Haiti working in agroforestry.

Rutt, Richard, Landisville, Pa., is beginning a two-year assignment with MCC in Akron, Pa., as a computer programmer/systems analyst.

Shank, Michael, Kidron, Ohio, is beginning a three-year assignment with MCC in the Philippines as a theater/education specialist.

Shellenberger, Crystal and Jonathan, Paoli, Ind., are beginning three-year assignments with MCC in El Salvador as community development workers.

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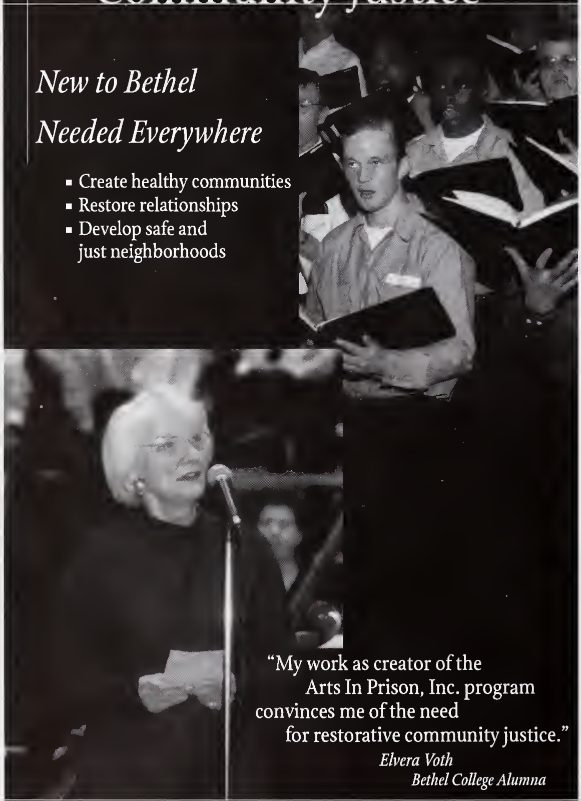

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Bethel College Alumna

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Births

Bender, Machaiah Alyssa, April 10, to Jeanette (Strelitker) and Todd Bender, Tavistock, Ont.

Dean, Matthias Michael, March 25, to Michael and Tonya (Brubaker) Dean, Fisher, Ill.

Fox, Alicia Melodie, April 27, to Kevin and Tricia (Weber) Fox, Perkasie, Pa.

Goldberg, Miranda Schirch, April 18, to Bill Goldberg and Lisa Schirch, Harrisonburg Va.

Hershberger, Mia Minette, April 17, to Jennifer (Kuhns) and Marc Hershberger, Mount Pleasant, Iowa.

Hodel, Samuel Joseph, April 28, to Dan and Justine Hodel, Roanoke, Ill.

Keeler, Elizabeth Grace, April 28, to Barbara (Raber) and Kendall Keeler, Quarryville, Pa.

Loganbill, Mia Karina, March 16, to Blair and Lisa (Habegger) Loganbill, Newton, Kan.

Pettit, Maxwell James, April 21, to Linda (Loflin) and Phil Pettit, Arvada, Colo.

Reinhardt, Brooke Mae, April 19, to Brent and Marla (Gerber) Reinhardt, Wakarusa, Ind.

Schindler, Julianne Margaret, April 13, to Bethany (Lyndaker) and Wayne Schindler, Turin, N.Y.

Shoup, Katelyn Sue, April 18, to Dwight and Kathy (Cool) Shoup, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Springer, Claire Elizabeth, April 25, to Joe and Rachelle (Lieferman) Springer, Hopedale, Ill.

Yoder, Analisa Mae, April 6, to Cedric and Lucinda (Yoder) Yoder, Belleville, Pa.

Zuercher, Kierra Noelle, March 28, to Pam (Schlabach) and Rick Zuercher, Canton, Ohio.

Marriages

Amon/Swartzentruber: Kathy Amon, Manhattan, Kan., and Laban Swartzentruber, Manhattan, April 29 at Manhattan Mennonite Church.

Bender/Weitzel: Daniel Bender, Tavistock, Ont., and Tracey Weitzel, Tavistock, March 25 at Tavistock Mennonite Church.

Bussey/Simms: Heather Bussey, Uniontown, Ohio, and Jonah Simms, Hartville, Ohio, March 1.

Gering/Pagano: Gabrielle Gering, Seattle, and John Pagano, Seattle, April 8 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Ritzville, Wash.

McLaughlin/Wagler: Sean McLaughlin, Massillon, Ohio, and Julia Wagler, Hartville, Ohio, April 8 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Alsene, Elmer, 81, Bloomington, Ill., died March 28 of heart failure. Spouse: Leta Alsene. Parents: Albert and Grace Alsene (deceased). Other survivors: children Walter, Elmer, Mark, Cheryl Hoffman; eight grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 1 at Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.).

Brunstetter, Travis, 21, Souderton, Pa., died April 27. Parents: Terry and Kathy Brunstetter. Funeral: May 2 at Souderton Mennonite Church.

Fisher, Amos Kauffman, 89, Millersburg, Ind., died April 19 of cardiac arrest. Spouse: Sarah Schrock Fisher. Parents: Aaron and Mary Kauffman Fisher (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Mishler, Ruth Webber, Debra Sweetser, James; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: April 22 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Graber, Marjorie Wedel, 83, Moundridge, Kan., died April 9. Spouse: Richard Graber. Parents: Jacob and Mary Krehbiel Wedel (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Ann Gaeddert, Bonnie Krehbiel, Donna Zerger, Tom, Tim; seven grandchildren. Funeral: April 13 at First Mennonite Church of Christian, Moundridge.

You are invited to an evening of fellowship and inspiration

Mennonite Church USA

as we seek our future together as God's transformed people in Mennonite Church USA. All are welcome.

- hear what congregations said in the congregational study, *Envisioning a New Mennonite Church*
- learn about plans for transformation
- fellowship across traditional MC/GC lines
- hear a sermon on "making all things new." (Rev. 21:5)

29 churchwide gatherings are planned throughout the United States, March-June 2000. Join the celebration for the church God is forming among us!

May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA. Speaker–Diane Zaerr
May 21, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA. Speaker–Ervin Stutzman
June 4, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD. Speaker–Doug Penner
June 8, Casselton Mennonite Church, Casselton, ND. (NCC annual sessions) Speaker–Bernie Wiebe
June 11, Community Mennonite Fellowship, Corning, NY. Speaker–Leslie Francisco, III
June 22, Moses Lake High School, Moses Lake, WA. (PNMC annual sessions) Speaker–Anne Stuckey
June 24, First Mennonite Church, Reedley, CA. (PSMC annual sessions) Speaker–John C. Murray

For more information contact Shelley Buller 316-283-5100 ext. 249
or e-mail ShelleyB@gcmc.org

March 5, First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS
March 12, Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, PA
March 12, West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, IA
March 19, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, NB.
March 19, College Mennonite Church, Goshen, IN
March 19, First Mennonite Church, Berne, IN
March 19, Peace Mennonite Church, Dallas, TX
March 26, Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, MN

April 2, Harrisonburg Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, VA
April 2, Norristown New Life Mennonite Church, Norristown, PA
April 2, Kaufman Mennonite Church, Davidsville, PA
April 2, Washington Community Fellowship, Washington, D C
April 9, Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News, VA
April 9, Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, IN
April 9, Reba Place Church, Evanston, IL
April 30, Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota, FL
April 30, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Hydro, OK
April 30, New Holland Mennonite Church, New Holland, PA

May 5-7, First Mennonite Church, Denver, CO. (RMMC annual sessions)
May 7, First Mennonite Church, Morton, IL
May 7, Kidron Mennonite Church, Kidron, OH
May 14, First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, OH
May 21, Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, PA
May 21, Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton, PA

June 4, Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman, SD
June 8-11, Casselton Mennonite Church, Casselton, ND (NCC annual sessions)
June 11, Community Mennonite Fellowship, Corning, NY
June 22-23, Moses Lake High School, Moses Lake, WA (PNMC annual sessions)
June 24, First Mennonite, Reedley, CA (PSMC annual sessions)

Krehbiel, Helen Schrag, 78, Hutchinson, Kan., died April 24. Spouse: Elmer Krehbiel (deceased). Parents: Andrew and Anna Kaufman Schrag (deceased). Survivors: children Alice Klassen, Anna Gajewski; five grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie, Kan.

Moyer, Laura Mae Myers, 73, Sellersville, Pa., died April 24 of CHF, CAD, ASCVD, diabetes M. Spouse: Orville Moyer. Parents: Daniel and Edith Fly Myers (deceased). Other survivors: children Nevin, David; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 27 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Shelly, Florence, 90, Des Plaines, Ill., died April 16. Survivors: children Nancy Coyle, Kathryn Boscardin, Judith Whalen, Phyllis Yniguez; 10 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 20 at Tinley Park, Ill.

Short, Terry, 54, Archbold, Ohio, died April 26. Spouse: Margaret Short. Parents: Jesse and Lucille Short. Other survivors: children Michael, Ryan; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 29 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Showalter, Nancy Rhodes, 72, Broadway, Va., died April 16 of cancer. Spouse: Henry Showalter. Parents: Robert and Mattie Lindamood Rhodes (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Brenda Showalter Golladay; one grandchild. Funeral: April 19 at Zion Mennonite Church, Broadway.

Troyer, Mattie Erb, 79, Corry, Pa., died April 13 of cancer. Spouse: Roy Troyer (deceased). Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Mose Erb (deceased). Survivors: children Judy Catalfu, Bob, Darrel, Eldon, Wayne; 14 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 17 at Spartansburg, Pa.

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phone 219-535-7730

visit us online @
http://wwww.mennonite.net

Wedel, Lloyd, 88, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died April 7. Spouse: Anna Graber Wedel (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Leah Graber Wedel (deceased). Survivors: son Harland; two grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 12 at First Mennonite Church of Pretty Prairie.

Wideman, Edgar, 56, Wallenstein, Ont., died March 27 of cancer. Spouse: Beatrice Martin Wideman. Parents: George and Elizabeth Wideman. Other survivors: children Kimberley, Elizabeth Spencer, Stephanie; one grandchild. Funeral: March 30 at Elmira (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Yantzi, Manetta Lehman, 92, Lowville, N.Y., died April 22. Spouse: Samuel Yantzi (deceased). Parents: Simon and Mattie Schrag Lehman (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Lou Morse, Kay Woodruff; four grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, N.Y.

classifieds

Advertising space is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. Call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School**, Atglen, Pa., has fall openings for teaching positions in ***middle school science/math, kindergarten*** and ***1st grade***. Contact Principal, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; fax 610-593-6041.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School** is accepting applications for ***director of development*** to establish and manage the development program for building the school's planned giving. Candidates will have experience in philanthropic development for a Christian organization, possess administrative skills, and have strong communication and relationship building skills. WFCS is a K-8 Mennonite elementary-middle school founded in 1941. Contact Development Committee Chair, WFCS, P.O. Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; email glenny@epix.net

- **Sarasota Christian School**, Sarasota, Fla., is currently accepting applications for the 2000-01 school year for the following faculty positions: ***general math/science, Spanish, computer, literature/language arts, PE*** (elementary, MS, HS), ***girls varsity volleyball coach***. To request an application, email Delores Mead at dmead@sarasotachristian.org

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a ***middle school science teacher*** and an ***instrumental (band) teacher*** beginning in the 2000-2001 school year. Penn View serves 575 students K-8. Please send your resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 216-723-1196.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** Global Ministries seeks ***representative to Latin America/Caribbean***. 50-80% beginning August 2000. Reside in Latin America or U.S. Identify, develop EMM's vision, strategy for longer-term mission in region, oversee personnel. Contact Mervin Charles, Box 458, Salunga, PA 17538-0458; 717-898-2251; email mervinc@emm.org

- **Eastern Mennonite High School**, 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, has the following positions for the 2000-2001 school year: ***physical, health and driver education*** (full-time), ***instrumental music*** (70 percent), ***social sciences*** (20 percent) sociology and psychology.

  Fax resumes to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528; or call 540-432-4502.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a candidate for the position of full-time ***youth pastor***. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. Located in southeastern Pa., Franconia has an exciting and growing jr. and sr. high youth program. Interested people should send resume to Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email info@franconiamennonite.org

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  Direct resume/inquiries to PMC Search Committee, 1041 N. Altadena Dr., Pasadena, CA 91107; email PasaMenno@aol.com. Applicant evaluation begins June 15.

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  Apply by May 22, 2000, to VMRC Center, 1501 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email hr@vmrc.org; website www.vmrc.org; fax 540-564-3700.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is recruiting for ***magazine editor for* a Common Place**. The magazine editor takes the lead in conceptualizing the contents, managing production tasks, promoting and maintaining the effectiveness of the magazine. Qualifications for this position include experience as copy editor, ability to plan in advance and meet deadlines, ability to communicate MCC programs to North American constituents. This is a three-year salaried or voluntary service position at the MCC binational headquarters in Akron, Pa. All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to: a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. The last day to receive applications is May 26, 2000. Start date is June 19, 2000.

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J. Lorne Peachey

Is GC-MC merger the will of God?

Five years ago, when the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) decided to merge, we told ourselves there would be difficulties; we just weren't sure what these would be. Today we're finding out. The biggest issue revolves around who gets to be part of the new church. And who gets to decide?

This problem—and the confusion that results as we talk about it—has some questioning whether we should at least slow down the integration process if not abandon it altogether. The latest analysis to come across my desk suggests the merger is more a product of human imagination than a move of the Spirit.

At any time in the church's pilgrimage, whether things are going well or not, we need to check ourselves against God's will. As the amount of energy and resources going into merger grows, we must also ask the question of this work: Is this of God? Or is it the product of human ambition?

Faithfulness questions are always difficult to discern. Answering them means considering several things:

1. It is arrogant to believe we can ever fully know the answer.

The history of the church is littered with examples of people or groups who were convinced they absolutely knew God's way, only to have history show how wrong they were. Events like the Crusades or Münster remind us of that.

Perhaps only historians of future generations will have the perspective to be able to say how we measure up today with God's will. This doesn't mean, however, that we should not ask the question—or answer it in the best way we know how.

2. How we answer depends on personal experience.

If the merger discussions so far have produced conflict for us, or if disagreements make us uncomfortable, we will likely question if we are in God's will. But if merger has been a positive experience—as it has been for me, the editor of a publication that is already a product of this transformation—then it's much easier to see God's hand at work. We must acknowledge that our perspectives come out of our experience and are therefore limited.

3. Questions about God's will must be answered in light of what we have decided so far and how we have come to those decisions.

To me, for example, the percentages of the votes we've taken on coming together are significant. At Wichita 95, 93 percent of GC delegates and 73 percent of MC delegates voted to merge. Two years later, 96 percent of the GC delegates approved plans to bring both groups under one executive board; the vote by the MC delegates on the same plans was 98 percent approval. At St. Louis 99 all votes to proceed passed by significant margins.

One must, of course, be careful interpreting votes in the democratic process as the will of God. But until we come to a better way, we cannot easily dismiss the fact that so many delegates have agreed for nearly five years that merger is what we should be about.

4. The church continues to be healthy as transformation plans proceed.

One of the fears I've heard voiced often is that merger will sidetrack us from the true task of the church. How does one measure that? Could giving be one indication? If so, we are doing well. As noted in news reports in recent issues of this magazine, contributions for the total work of the church, including mission, have been on the increase even as we work at integration. For four consecutive years, giving to the GC has been over budget. During the past three years, MC area conferences have given more to denominational structures and program boards than ever before.

Merger is not draining the church. Our primary work, spreading the gospel, is continuing. Can that be an indicator we are within the will of God?

Many difficult issues remain to be worked through as we continue to unite. And we must constantly ask ourselves whether we are following the Spirit or our own inclinations as we work at these. But until it becomes apparent that enough of us are hearing another voice from God, we are called to do the best we can in pursuing what we believe to be God's will for us today: transforming GC and MC churches into Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA.—*jlp*

Merger by any other word

What is this activity we are engaged in: merger, integration, transformation?

When unity talk first began, the operable word was "integration," which was seen to be less emotionally loaded than "merger." Now that we're into it, we're talking "transformation."

This change in language reflects a changing understanding of what this activity is all about. At the same time, a change in terms can make it difficult to be sure we are talking about the same thing.

Merger, integration, transformation—call it what you will. The goal is the same: to merge GC and MC churches into a new, integrated, transformed denomination. With Kreider and Lapp (page 4), I believe this is God's call for us today. —*jlp*

the Mennonite

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how Jean Dawson handled the challenge of midlife

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Way to hope

As one who loves the church, I am awed, delighted and profoundly grateful for Richard Kauffman's "A Third Way Between Fight and Flight"(May 2). It communicates more perfectly than I had imagined my own interests, prayers and longings.

I wince at "congregations of refuge" because of its association with outcasts but eagerly support the accommodation it implies for our difficult times. Perhaps having the local church body carefully formulate its "third way" by posting signed majority and minority views on this and other critical issues on which we differ could become a practice in line with both the concept of "congregations of refuge" and Kauffman's thoughtful fourth point regarding discernment processes.

I long for the Holy Spirit, through Kauffman and others, to speak also to a third way on how we read, interpret and appropriate the Scriptures. I see our differences in interpretation methods as extremely valuable but also as decisive in our struggles to be faithful.

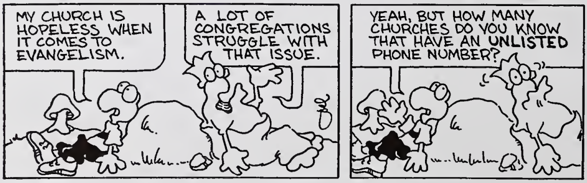
In line with Kauffman, I too am eager to be part of a larger church that does not foreclose its identity on either side of the homosexuality issue. While I am ready to be part of a local congregation of refuge and would do my best to help overcome the stigma it may imply, I am also ready to commit to a local congregation that wrestles with the issues, decides for the time being on a more conservative position held by the majority but thoughtfully honors my interests and alternative positions, keeping open to further revelation. I am filled with hope and joy for a third way.—*Walter S. Friesen, Newton, Kan.*

Kauffman's "third way" is the brightest ray of hope so far for the survival of an integrated Mennonite Church. His suggestions for holding the conflicting impulses together in creative tension are reminiscent of the Jerusalem Conference chronicled in Acts 15. That too was a discernment process rather than a battle to win public opinion. That too was a willingness to make some tough, discriminating decisions. That too was a readiness to live with some ambiguity and the confirming of "congregations of refuge" outside the Jerusalem orbit.

The Campolo model is especially helpful. Richard is on Tony's side, and I'm on Peggy's side. But the two of us can live with the Tonys and Peggys in the Mennonite Church if we have the early church's will to tolerate the ambiguity in obedience to our Lord's mandate for the unity of his church (John 17).

Could Nashville 2001 be redesigned as a Jerusalem Conference with "discernmentarians" rather than parliamentarians so that we too could come away saying, "It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us," to proceed with transformation without splintering in the way that so nearly happened in the early church? Or if Nashville is too big and unwieldy, perhaps a miniconference could be held before then? The Richard Kauffmans among us could be resource people for such an event.—*Leland Harder, North Newton, Kan.*

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann


MY CHURCH IS HOPELESS WHEN IT COMES TO EVANGELISM.
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YEAH, BUT HOW MANY CHURCHES DO YOU KNOW THAT HAVE AN UNLISTED PHONE NUMBER?

Data, not demonstrations

"Mennonites Sing for Peace, Join IMF Demonstrations" (May 2) contains the major complaint that "as conditions for International Monetary Fund loans, countries are often required to increase exports and devalue their currency." I would like to suggest that people, such as the students, who want to help poor people in low-income countries might come to different conclusions concerning the interpretation of the economics involved in such a devaluation.

An overvalued exchange rate can significantly harm a country. In order to maintain one, the government of any poor country must ration scarce foreign exchange. Exports with such an exchange rate are discriminated against, and imports, when one can obtain the necessary permission, are subsidized. An overvalued currency hurts any small domestic producer trying to compete with imports. Further, such an exchange rate leads to capital flight, which robs capital-poor countries of needed investment. The foreign exchange rationing is often subject to corruption in allocation.

Ultimately, overvalued exchange rates become untenable, causing substantial additional inflation. Bankruptcies commonly occur in the process. Almost all economists, from quite conservative to very liberal, will agree that maintaining an overvalued exchange rate

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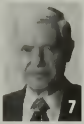

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readers say

is asking for trouble. The IMF should enter discussions about the best way to restore an equilibrium exchange rate under such circumstances.

At the least, give the IMF credit for trying to help these countries. It is not going to make a mistake that is obvious to any college student who has spent a few months in a low-income country. The IMF operates under difficult and complicated conditions. With hindsight, some of us believe from time to time that the IMF has made mistakes. But it is an international body with objectives that most of us believe in. It has a diverse staff of capable, bright people. They deserve a debate based on data and the merits of the issue, not on slogans, simplistic arguments and who happens to be able to control the streets at the moment.—*L. Emil Kreider, Beloit, Wis.*

Hospital high life

I am being drawn into the conversation on the demise of Kings View Hospital (Readers Say, Feb. 22, March 21, April 25), perhaps in defense of the Mennonite community in Reedley. We at First Mennonite Church had great interest and involvement in Kings View until the late 1960s. My husband, Victor Janzen, who had been in Civilian Public Service at Ypsilanti (Mich.) State Hospital served on the board of directors. The atmosphere was one of sacrifice, commitment and volunteerism. Looking back, it seemed small and family-like.

When the hospital began taking state funding, restrictions discouraged volunteerism. Hiring practices no longer gave special consideration to the motivation Mennonites had to serve people with mental illness. Kings View became the Cadillac of mental hospitals, but the cost of running it became prohibitive. The Mennonite influence was long gone, replaced by the high life.—*Pearl Janzen, Reedley, Calif.*

Cover photo by Sharyl M. Calhoun

Sharyl M. Calhoun

Fitness has its rewards: George and Jean Dawson have been married 51 years. Running is one of many hobbies they have shared.

Fit for a midlife challenge

by Sharyl M. Calhoun

The middle years of life have a bad reputation. Who hasn't heard the horror stories? Midlife is supposedly when gravity and hormones take control of your face, your figure and your frame of mind, leaving you cantankerous, wrinkled and bulging in all the wrong places. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Jean Dawson was a 40-year-old housewife and mother when her life changed—for the better. She was right on the edge of losing her sons to adulthood, a time of floundering for many mothers as they seek a new sense of purpose. Jean recalls how she persuaded herself to make the most rewarding change of her life—getting fit at 40.

At the age of 40, Jean Dawson refused to allow midlife changes to control her future. She simply determined to make some changes on her own.

"Our oldest son ran track, and we used to go to all the track meets. [One boy who] was very thin … had to run two miles around that track," Jean says and laughs. "I looked at that thin boy and thought, My goodness, that's an awfully long way for a little boy like that to run. Well, if he can do it, I think I can."

Jean, now 72, and her husband, George, 78, who live in Connersville, Ind., started running and didn't stop for 31 years. More than 250 trophies, plaques, medallions and other prizes are displayed in their home, proclaiming that Jean did reach her two-mile goal—and much more. She, like most women, viewed midlife as a challenge, but she met it head-on.

"If at the age of 40 you decide you want to do something, then that will make you feel better about yourself," says Jean. "We started running around the school track. We weren't as strong as we thought we were, because it took me about four stops to get around the quarter-mile track … and part of it, I walked. It was about a month before I got all the way around the track without stopping. Each time we went down there, we tried to increase our mileage. It wasn't anytime until we were up to three miles."

Even when life got tough, Jean pressed on. She was determined to stay fit. "It got to be monotonous running on the track, so we ran on the sidewalk. One time I stubbed my toe on a crack and fell. I had a huge knot on my forehead and a hideous bruise down the side of my face. Then another time, I fell and broke my left wrist."

While such injuries would hobble the efforts of many women, Jean rarely does anything halfway. Nothing was going to deter for long the Dawsons from their 3- to 5-mile daily run. They had become dedicated to the idea of staying in shape and growing older gracefully. Competition was the next step. They entered races in Indiana, Ohio and as far away as Texas.

"The longest race we have ever signed up for has been 6.2 miles, which is the 10-kilometer race. I can't ever remember being beaten by anyone my own age," Jean says with a smile. She has often raced against women 10 to 15 years younger and won, even at age 70.

"Some people tell me that's who they tried to beat—me, that white-haired woman."

How has she accomplished such amazing feats? "It's the way you take care of yourself," Jean says. "I've never smoked or drunk alcohol. There have been a lot of races where I prayed the whole time for strength. It really works."

Every time George or Jean won a race at a nearby university, they received a red brick inlaid with a metal plate announcing their place. They accumulated so many bricks that Jean made a brick walk behind their house. There were still 20 bricks left over, so she turned them into frilly, eye-catching doorstops and gave them away as Christmas gifts.

Dozens of beautiful trophies are shelved in the Dawsons' hallway. Walking quickly past them, Jean picks up a black marble trophy from its own special shelf. "This is my favorite," she says. "My son designed it for a race we ran in down in Texas."

Staying fit has other rewards as well. "I was in my late 50s in one race we ran. It was in Indianapolis." Jean laughs, self-consciously, "I won a prize for having the prettiest legs. There were many younger women present, but I won it."

Today Jean still appears as a trim 5-foot-4-inch woman who looks at least 10 years younger than her actual age. "I've been asked how I've kept my girlish figure," she says. "I just never wanted to have that square look like a woman has in later life, and I think that's helped me keep my shape a little under control. It's not perfect—nobody is. But I don't plan on getting out of [my size] clothes—I don't care how old I am."

Eating right is another aspect of the Dawsons' fitness program. Jean and George do not eat big meals, and they usually limit their meat choices to chicken or turkey. "Some people look at runners and think, They must eat like a horse," Jean says. "But it was just the opposite for us. Exercise curbs our appetite."

Clearly there are many benefits to getting in shape in midlife. However, Jean says, the best part about being fit is that "you're able to enjoy each other in the later years when you really need each other." After 51 years, George and Jean's marriage has stayed fit. They attribute their long and healthy marriage to their faith in God. "[God] works out your problems if you turn them over to him," Jean says, and adds that when they disagree on something, they don't make a fuss. They simply discuss their different viewpoints. "It works out if you want it to."

Jean offers specific advice for people seeking a positive change in their physical fitness. "Running is not for everybody. Pick the exercise that fits you and start out. Nobody's ready for something altogether different. If you're overweight and you want to run, lose a little bit of weight first because it's harder on your joints, carrying extra pounds around. If you think you have to run to lose weight, then watch your diet and start slowly. Don't think you're going to run five miles the first day, because you won't."

For those who struggle with weight problems, Jean encourages a change of habit. "Instead of reaching for food, reach for something to do," she says. She recommends starting a new hobby. Her own hobbies include making cowboy kids and teddy bears (she estimates that she's made 200 bears to date), wallpapering, refinishing furniture, feather-painting cabinets, serving as a church trustee and volunteering at a local nursing home.

"I'm a pretty busy lady," Jean says with satisfaction. "I try to keep my mind and hands occupied at all times. I try not to waste one moment. You don't know when it's going to be your last."

At the age of 40, Jean Dawson refused to allow midlife changes to control her future. She simply determined to make some changes on her own. At the age of 72, she again faces change. Due to a knee problem, George has had to make a choice between running and keeping his tire alignment shop open. Not surprisingly, he has decided to keep his business open "for another 20 years," he says. Still as determined as ever, Jean and George walk three to five miles each day. They plan to remain active participants in life for the rest of their days.

The gentle smile appears again as Jean says, "Of all the trophies and things we have won together, I give God the thanks because we had the health and the energy and his strength to do it."

I try to keep my mind and hands occupied at all times. I try not to waste one moment. You don t know when it s going to be your last.—*Jean Dawson*

Sharyl M. Calhoun lives in Berne, Ind.

Check out these websites as you begin your own personal fitness program. These sites can help you get started on the right track, at any age, toward proper exercise and nutrition.—*Sharyl M. Calhoun*

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Reach out to outsiders

Insights from the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19

by Marlin Jeschke

The Great Commission given by the risen Jesus to make disciples of all nations is a direct and logical consequence of all of those acts of Jesus in reaching out to outsiders, of which the Zacchaeus story is only one.

Finally I heard a sermon in which Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) was not misrepresented. I'm sure I've heard well over a dozen sermons here or there in which Zacchaeus is pictured as a crooked tax collector who ripped people off. Even the popular William Barclay commentary follows this line.

According to this view, Zacchaeus' life was turned around through his encounter with Jesus, and he declared himself ready to make fourfold restitution wherever he had done wrong and give half of his ill-gotten gains to charity, still keeping the other half of that dirty money for himself.

I think we are tempted to make ourselves feel good by running down such a character from the gospel story. We, of course, haven't been crooks like Zacchaeus.

More likely we simply tend to read into the story the expectations of modern American evangelism, where we focus on the sensational conversions of gangsters, drug addicts, political shysters, sexual profligates, wayward ministers even, or just plain old criminals who encounter grace—sometimes, alas, cheap grace. So we assume Zacchaeus must have been someone like that.

What does the Zacchaeus story actually say? Here, as in so many parts of the Bible, it is crucial to have some awareness of the original situation. As a tax collector, Zacchaeus worked with the Roman occupation. That was his big offense, and that was why he was ostracized by the Jewish community, possibly also excommunicated from the synagogue.

Most American readers of the Zacchaeus story miss this point. Because our country has never been occupied by a foreign power, we can't imagine that kind of situation. If we were ever occupied by a foreign power, you can bet we would see the same scenario—some people "cooperating" with the occupation in order to keep roads maintained, railways running, groceries moving, electrical power and telephone utilities operating, a criminal justice system functioning and, yes, collecting taxes, all for the sake of helping the public to survive. But these people would be condemned by others, perhaps by the majority, as traitors.

Zacchaeus wasn't a crook, something we should notice from a careful reading of the story even apart from knowing the historical context. As Nancy Kauffmann pointed out in a sermon at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., Zacchaeus challenged his hearers with a big and important "if":

"If I have defrauded anyone … I will pay it back fourfold" (verse 8). He dared anyone to identify where he had swindled them.

Fourfold restitution was the standard sentence in Jewish law for theft. But how in the world could Zacchaeus ever make fourfold restitution if he had ripped people off right and left all over his tax district? Surely we don't suppose he was making an empty promise, like so many politicians today. Or that if he had been confronted by clear cases of fraudulent tax collection he would have stalled or resorted to denial, like too many businesses today.

Zacchaeus' integrity doesn't mean there weren't crooked tax collectors at the time. There likely were too many of them who lined their pockets with fraudulent billing. But he wasn't one of them. That is likely why he challenged his hearers with the words, "If I have defrauded anyone." He was likely well-to-do, thanks to prudent money management. But prudent stewardship of money wasn't a sin with Jesus, and it shouldn't be one with us.

Mennonites who bought or sold insurance several generations ago often were excommunicated from the church for their participation in a "worldly" organization and their failure to "trust" God to provide in times of crisis. Most of these ex-Mennonites were upright, ethical and Christian people. But from the point of view of the church at the time they deserved excommunication.

Jesus welcomed the excommunicated Zacchaeus back into the fold. "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham" (verse 9). This act is in line with Jesus' overall position concerning the Roman occupation—refusing to demonize the Romans, rejecting revolt against them, rejecting tax resistance, even ruling out hatred of Rome, instead calling for love of the enemy.

Remember Jesus' sermon in his hometown of Nazareth at the outset of his ministry (Luke 4:16-30)? He was almost killed because he spoke only of "the acceptable year of the Lord" and left off the second part of the Old Testament text (from Isaiah 61:2), "and the day of vengeance of our God," adding words offensive to his hearers about only outsiders such as the Sidonian widow and Naaman the Syrian finding salvation during the time of Elijah and Elisha.

Remember his well-known saying on the tax question, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (Luke 20:25)? Jesus here counseled against tax resistance and in this respect was followed by Paul, according to Romans 13:6: "For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants."

And in the cleansing of the temple, Jesus quotes from Isaiah 56:7, "This house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations" (Mark 11:17).

Although this story is not about a prodigal, as is the one in Luke 15, there is nothing in it to discourage concern for conversion and transformation of the lives of criminals and moral profligates or any unethical people. It's just that this is not the point of the Zacchaeus narrative.

It's about not demonizing or ostracizing those who associate with people society identifies as the enemy. Mennonites should surely recognize the issue here. Often we have been faulted by American society for reaching out to and associating with "the enemy"—in Vietnam, in Cuba, in Eastern Europe during the time of communism, perhaps most recently in Iraq. Sometimes our association was for the sake of relief, sometimes to seek reconciliation.

When Jesus reached out to those whom Jewish society considered outsiders, the end result, we should never forget, was our inclusion as Gentiles. In Matthew 8:5-13, in connection with the healing of a Roman centurion's servant, Jesus says, "I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into outer darkness" (verses 11-12). The Great Commission given by the risen Jesus to "make disciples of all nations" is a direct and logical consequence of all of those acts of Jesus in reaching out to outsiders, of which the Zacchaeus story is only one.

Like everything else in the Gospels, the Zacchaeus story offers us rich instruction. It tells us to keep reaching out to outsiders.

But we have no justification for making this tax collector out to be a crook in order to get the benefit of this instruction. If we do, we are likely to miss it.

Marlin Jeschke taught theology at Goshen College before retiring in 1994. He is a member of College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

MENNOS AT WORK

Owen Gingerich, Cambridge, Mass.

Congregation: Mennonite Congregation of Boston

Occupation: astronomer and educator

Years in occupation: 40

Why I do what I do: I have always been interested in the world and stars, how we explain things and how we arrive at these explanations. I am comfortable with logic and mathematics and spent a decade crunching numbers on what seemed like a giant electronic computer, although the room full of vacuum tubes had only a fraction of the power of a modern laptop. I learned that doing cutting-edge science requires many judgment calls, both about what was worth doing in terms of potential results and about what data to use when observations seemed to conflict. Eventually I saw that a second way to understand science was to examine its history. For many years now my principal research has concerned the history of astronomy, concentrating on the Renaissance, when issues of cosmology and faith were strongly intermingled. What are the respective claims to truth of science and of faith? I see an old universe with a beginning and a fascinating history. Billions of years were required to build up the elements essential for life. What is the role of evolution, and how are human qualities of conscience and consciousness to be understood in such a context?

The role of faith in what I do: Faith and discipleship relate to interactions with my colleagues, how to deal with competition, cooperation and equal opportunities. Also there are intellectual issues of reconciling faith and science in a setting where science is often presented as strictly reductionist and materialistic. This ranges from having given a sermon at the National Cathedral in Washington to serving on the advisory committee of the Program on Dialogue Between Science, Religion and Ethics of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In April 1999, I arranged and moderated a debate at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington between Nobel laureate Steven Weinberg and Anglican priest and physicist Sir John Polkinghorne on "Is the Universe Designed?"

After sunny start, Mennonite Church Canada now also clouded by membership divisions

Ten months ago, the new Mennonite church in Canada seemed able to avoid the membership pitfalls plaguing its sibling in the United States. With a 96 percent vote, Canadian delegates at St. Louis 99 had adopted membership guidelines for Mennonite Church Canada. Meanwhile, the U.S. assembly, fractured over the issue of homosexuality, could only vote to delay the membership decision for two years, then left under a cloud of uncertainty.

That cloud has drifted north across the border. Despite its early calm appearances, Mennonite Church Canada is now struggling with challenges to the membership guidelines, particularly the stipulation that discipline of congregations rests with the area conferences.

The flashpoint is the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta and member congregation Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church, which accepts noncelibate homosexuals as members. The conference's attempts to take action have left it paralyzed and prompted two moderators to resign in the past two years. While the issue started simmering prior to St. Louis, it has exploded since then. A February vote to place Calgary on provisional membership fell just shy of the required two-thirds majority. A proposal for a three-year study also failed.

The 18-member conference is now facing the possibility of losing as many as half its congregations. One has already withdrawn, and four others have set a July 31 deadline to leave if Calgary isn't disciplined. Another three to five congregations are also considering withdrawing, says conference minister Ray Landis.

"They want to see [Mennonite Church Canada] take a stronger position in support of what we traditionally have upheld," he says.

That has produced calls for the denomination to take action on Calgary. But the membership guidelines state that only the area conference can do that. "There are congregations that have not been able to understand why Mennonite Church Canada is unwilling, in their perception, to get involved," says Dan Nighswander, general secretary for Mennonite Church Canada.

Alberta moderator Katie Harder says the conference has had concerns with the guidelines since before St. Louis but that the denomination proceeded, "believing that the dissenting voices would come alongside." But that has not been the case. "Albertans think for themselves," she says, "and they are also prepared to act."

As a result, says David Schroeder, a member of the committee that drafted the guidelines, Alberta is being held hostage by members who want "a more radical statement against homosexuality." He is confident the guidelines can work. "But they won't work if churches won't abide by them," Schroeder says.

He also holds Calgary partially responsible for the predicament. Its decision to join the Supportive Congregations Network divided the conference into camps of support or opposition. "Once you polarize, then everybody loses," he says.

Following a meeting with conference leaders earlier this month, Mennonite Church Canada agreed to Alberta's request for help to find a solution to the Calgary situation. A special conference delegate session is planned for July 8. Calgary is also a member of Northwest Conference, which has placed the congregation on provisional membership status.

The struggles in Alberta have had residual, although less contentious, effects in the neighboring Conference of Mennonites in British Columbia. The guidelines say membership in an area conference automatically means membership in the denomination. About a dozen of British Colombia's 35 congregations had not been members of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, a predecessor to Mennonite Church Canada. Those congregations are reluctant to join the new body, particularly given the current homosexuality controversy.

"They feel their hand was forced" by the adoption of the membership guidelines, says interim conference minister Gary Loewen.

In response, the Mennonite Church Canada General Board has endorsed a five-year plan in British Columbia to allow for "provisionally active" membership for those congregations that do not want to join the national body. The plan will come before the area conference's delegates this summer.

Despite their tensions with the membership guidelines, Nighswander says the Alberta and British Columbia efforts are necessary as Mennonite Church Canada confronts the challenges of creating a new church body.

Says Nighswander: "We're trying to discern this as we go. ... There is a lot of stuff to work out."—*Rich Preheim*

Revised guidelines to be released

Revised membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA are expected to get their first hearing May 24-25 at a meeting of the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) in Kansas City, Kan.

At last summer's convention in St. Louis, U.S. delegates voted to study the original guidelines, which were adopted for Mennonite Church Canada. As a result of negative reactions to the guidelines, a CLC committee has been working at revisions. A final version is scheduled to come before delegates at next year's convention in Nashville, Tenn.

Among the original guidelines' provisions were:

- All current General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church members automatically become members of the new denomination.
- Area conferences hold responsibility for discipline of congregations at variance with church positions.
- Membership in the denomination is held by virtue of membership in an area conference.—*Rich Preheim*

Africans explore sharing their gifts

MWC holds workshops as start of global initiative

ACCRA, Ghana—Last month's Mennonite World Conference (MWC) workshop in Accra, with participants from the Ghana Mennonite Church and the Evangelical Mennonite Church of Burkina Faso, was scriptural: The last was first.

During the preceding six months, MWC had been holding workshops throughout Africa on MWC's Global Gifts Sharing Project, an initiative to encourage the sharing of gifts among churches around the world. The Accra workshop was the last of nine Africa workshops. But it was the first one that brought together two member churches in the same workshop.

"We have always shared a boundary, but we have never had contact," Michael Badasu, moderator of the Ghana Mennonite Church, said at the close of the two-day workshop. "There has been a spirit of gift sharing through the format of this workshop."

Through such sharing, MWC leaders hope that the unity of the church will be strengthened and that churches can develop a stronger awareness of their own gifts—such as material and financial resources and areas of expertise —as well as the gifts of others elsewhere.

The first phase of this project is compiling a global inventory of gifts available within each MWC member conference. In the second phase, the inventory will be made available to churches and church-related institutions and programs with the hope that churches will take the initiative in setting up sharing relationships with each other.

All workshops used a standard format. After introductions and a brief church history, the group was given background information about MWC and the Global Gifts Sharing Project. This was followed by sessions on the theological understandings of gifts and gift sharing and a discussion of how gifts are understood in the participants' cultural traditions. Finally, participants were divided into groups to identify resources and gifts present in each of the churches involved.

"The participants have been in unanimous agreement that in their cultures all gifts are of divine origin and that gifts are intended by God to be shared with others," says workshop leader Tim Lind, who works with MWC and Mennonite Central Committee based in South Africa. "We believe that these are also the foundational biblical principles regarding gifts."

The workshops have led to serious reflection on why the ethic of sharing gifts is not stronger in Africa. "Many African churches struggle to support their structures, including their pastors," Lind says. "While it is true that many African Brethren in Christ and Mennonites do not have a lot of material resources, we know that a much higher level of self-support is possible."

While the specific objective of the workshop is the preparation of an inventory of gifts, participants agree that the process itself has been more valuable than anything else. "Churches in Africa have for many years been used to thinking of themselves as only having needs," explains project director Pakisa Tshimika, an administrator with Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services International in Fresno, Calif. "The gift sharing workshops are in a small way contributing to a different perspective."

A participant in January's Tanzania workshop enthusiastically noted, "We are a rich church."

A preliminary report of the Africa portion of the project will be presented to the MWC General Council in Guatemala in July. Project facilitators will work with churches in other parts of the world during the coming year. *—MWC News Service*

Churches in Africa have for many years been used to thinking of themselves as only having needs. The gift sharing workshops are in a small way contributing to a different perspective.

—Pakisa Tshimika

Looking to a bright future

Darnell Parker from Findlay, Ohio, and his fellow members of Bluffton (Ohio) College's class of 2000 proceed to their commencement ceremony May 7 where degrees were conferred on 216 students. Also on May 7, Hesston (Kan.) College graduated 129 students. The commencement season started April 29 with the graduation of 23 students from Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, graduated 356 students the next day. Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., saw 40 students receive degrees on May 19. On May 21, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., expected to graduate 85 students and Goshen (Ind.) College 225.

Correction: Bluffton (Ohio) College professor Perry Bush is not the first Mennonite to serve on the Rhodes Consultation, as reported in the May 9 issue. Goshen (Ind.) College professor Keith Graber Miller was part of the project since its inception in 1995, serving until 1999.

Jordanians build dreams with MCC loans

MUKHEIBEH, Jordan—Fatimah Mohammed Hussein used to be afraid that her crumbling mud house would fall down around her. And she didn't even own it.

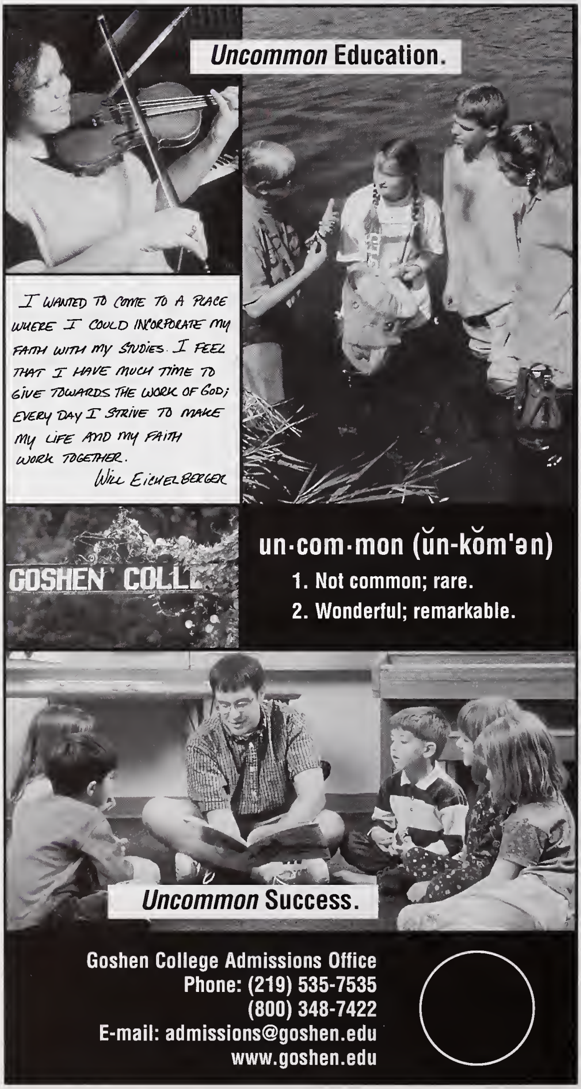
Now she looks at her sturdy concrete home with its modest furnishings and with pride calls it her very own. "Now it's much better," Hussein says. "I own the house. It's larger."

Five years ago, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Jordan loaned Hussein $2,100 to build a two-room home. Over the next three years, with the help of her five children, she paid off the loan.

In fact, she has managed to find enough money to add three more rooms. And she is planning more additions, including connecting to running water.

"I have good hope for my future," Hussein says, sitting comfortably on a mat in front of the house.

MCC first began giving out grants and loans in Jordan some 10 years ago. More than $100,000 is currently circulating in MCC's revolving loan program. More than 100 loans—for agriculture, low-income housing and businesses—have been given out in the past year alone. In the past three years, only one loan has been written off, and that's because the recipient died.—*Carol Thiessen for MCC News Service*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Models considered for new mission structure

CHICAGO—U.S. mission leaders are considering three models for the mission structure of Mennonite Church USA. Those models were identified during an April 27-May 1 retreat in Chicago.

Each model consists of a central mission entity and regional centers that would deliver much of the mission activity. One model lodges governance in the center and delegates authority and much of the program to the regions. A second model places governance in the regions, which would delegate some authority and program to the center. The third model places governance in both the center and the regions, with each delegating authority and program to the other.

The retreat was attended by the Mission Transformation Steering Committee and the joint executive committee of the current denominational mission agencies. A model recommendation is expected to be made by October, when an organizational blueprint is to be drafted.—*MBM News Service*

MMA reports high level of member satisfaction

SYRACUSE, Ind.—Mennonite Mutual Aid members have high levels of satisfaction and in staying with MMA, according to survey results reported at the organization's May 4-5 board meeting.

On a five-point scale, 45 percent of people surveyed gave MMA the highest score for satisfaction. Another 46 percent gave the second-highest rating. Nearly 95 percent of respondents said they were very likely to stay with MMA.

The board also discussed scheduled meetings with Mennonite Church USA leaders about how the organization will affiliate with the new church.—*MMA News Service*

Ethiopia new site for Goshen College program

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College has added Ethiopia as the 17th nation for its Study-Service Term, starting with the 2001-2002 academic year. The Ethiopia term will be offered once every three years in a rotation with China and Indonesia.

by the way ...

There are 1,162 Amish schools with 32,193 pupils in 20 states and one province.
—*Canadian Mennonite*

straight talk from a Brethren sister
Wanda L. Callahan

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As she reports, Callahan's advocacy has often generated "Yes, but. . . ." in response. Her passion in this book may stir more "Yes buts"—and should also generate discussion, fresh thought, and even sometimes advocacy to match hers.

"Wanda Callahan's deep faith and her practical understanding of Christian discipleship shine through every page of this satisfying and valuable book."
—Bob Gross, Coordinator, Ministry of Reconciliation, Church of the Brethren

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Births

Anderson, Ian Thomas, April 29, to Aimee and John Anderson, Harleysville, Pa.

Cancienne, Zoe Angelle, April 11, to Alan and Julie (Cortez) Cancienne, Destrehan, La.

Gabel, Jacob Nikolas, May 5, to Brad and Kathy (Vander Werff) Gabel, Pasadena, Calif.

Hershey, Michala Elizabeth, April 30, to Peter Hershey and M. J. Mulcahey, Harleysville, Pa.

Longacre, Samuel Roy, April 14, to Jim Longacre and Ann Reedy, Washington.

Louviere, Natalie Katherine, March 13, to David Jr. and Toby (Martin) Louviere, Des Allemands, La.

Nyce, Jenna Sue, April 27, to Christopher and Diane (Refsnider) Nyce, Telford, Pa.

Penner, Victoria Bailey Parish, March 22, received for adoption by Murray Penner, Benbrook, Texas.

Quilty, Thomas Finn, March 27, to Chuck and Kam (Knox) Quilty, Normal, Ill.

Ramirez, Carson Ray, April 10, to Shawn and Tara (Short) Ramirez, Archbold, Ohio.

Schriner, Heather Lynn, April 10, to Brad and Lori (Friesen) Schriner, Salina, Kan.

Waggenspack, Jessi May, April 12, to Aaron and Janet (LaBlanc) Waggenspack, Sorrento, La.

Yoder, Analisa Mae, April 6, to Cedric and Lucinda (Yoder) Yoder, Belleville, Pa.

Yoder, Nicholas Allen, April 3, to Kyle and Nancy Yoder, Elkhart, Ind.

Marriages

Bedka/Friesen: Jody Bedka, Fairmont, Neb., and Dustin Friesen, Henderson, Neb., April 29 at Fairmont Community Methodist Church.

Graber/Schlabach: Joel Graber, Goshen, Ind., and Jessica Schlabach, Middlebury, Ind., April 15 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Martin/Unsicker: Roger Martin, Middlebury, Ind., and Mary Jo Unsicker, Bremen, Ind., March 18 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Deaths

Abe, Edith Irene Blauch, 91, Quakertown, Pa., died April 7. Spouse: Royal Abe (deceased). Parents: Ephraim and Savilla Yoder Blauch (deceased). Survivors: children Janet Blosser; three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: April 12 at Pinto (Md.) Mennonite Church.

Atkinson, Judy Hostetler, 55, Wooster, Ohio, died April 7 of cancer. Spouse: James Atkinson. Parents: George (deceased) and Velma Troyer Hostetler. Other survivors: son Dale. Funeral: April 11 at Smithville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Bergeron, Lucien, 73, Des Allemands, La., died April 26. Spouse: Marguerite Areenaux Bergeron (deceased). Parents: Adam and Lizzie Bergeron (deceased). Survivors: children Roy, Byran, Stanley, Yolanda Triche; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 28 at Des Allemands Mennonite Church.

Coffman, Arnelia Mary Swartz, 90, Harrisonburg, Va., died April 17. Spouse: Robert Coffman Sr. (deceased). Parents: Ben and Dora Swartz (deceased). Survivors: children Gladys Hedrick; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 21 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Denlinger, Dean, 70, Cincinnati, died April 16 of leukemia. Spouse: Pamela DeWitt Denlinger. Parents: Ardon and Ruth Fisher Denlinger (deceased). Other survivors: children Eric, Nicholas, Elise, Rebecca, Kurt, Clay, Frederica, Jason Riley, Susannah; nine grandchildren. Funeral: April 19 at Troutwood (Ohio) Church of the Brethren. Memorial service: May 20 at Cincinnati Mennonite Fellowship.

Dick, Edward, 92, Halstead, Kan., died April 7 of cancer. Spouse: Ruth Kreitzberg Dick. Parents: Frank and Justina Wall Dick (deceased). Other survivors: children Dale, Donald; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 10 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead.

Grove, Timothy, 87, Lyndhurst, Va., died April 19 of cancer. Spouse: Geneva Rowe Grove. Parents: Isaac and Emma Grove (deceased). Other survivors: children Billy, Cecil, Gene, Kenneth, Timothy, Sharon Sweet, Carol Wheeler; 12 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 22 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro, Va.

Horst, Elvin, 90, Orrville, Ohio, died March 10. Spouse: Melissa Kilmer Horst. Parents: Moses and Elizabeth Kreider Horst (deceased). Other survivors: children Vernon, Elvin Jr., Romana Hartzler, Virginia Burkholder, Erma Taylor, Lois Steiner, Rhonda Mease, Maxine; 21 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: March 13 at Smithville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Kanagy, Verda King, 88, West Liberty, Ohio, died April 25. Spouse: Earl Kanagy (deceased). Parents: Chuncey and Nancy Yoder King (deceased). Survivors: children Max, Marie Stevanus; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: April 29 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

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Peachey, Harvey Willis, 43, Yeagertown, Pa., died April 19 from heart problems. Parents: Harvey and Deloris Peachey. Funeral: April 22 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

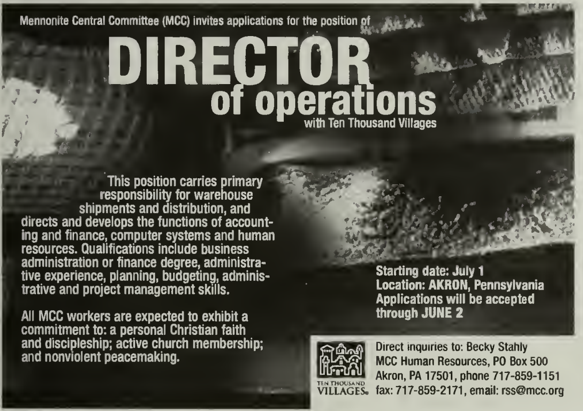
Schroeder, Marie Neufeld, 95, McPherson, Kan., died April 18. Spouse: Samuel Schroeder (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Elizabeth Neufeld (deceased). Survivors: children Robert, Gary, Marna Hartman; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 22 at Glidden-Ediger Chapel, McPherson.

Siemens, Marie Friesen, 93, Inman, Kan., died April 22. Spouse: Alvin Siemens. Parents: Jacob and Maria Fast Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Marilyn Krehbiel, Vernabelle Stayrook, Betsy Buller; eight grandchildren 10 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 25 at Hebron Mennonite Church, Buhler, Kan.

Souder, Harvey, 80, Telford, Pa., died April 22 of cancer. Spouse: Sara Bechtel Souder. Parents: Harvey and Mary Bergey Souder (deceased). Other survivors: children Gloria Keeler, David; seven grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at Rockhill Mennonite Church, Telford.

Unzicker, Josephine Ulrich, 86, Metamora, Ill., died April 23. Parents: David and Lena Eigsti Ulrich (deceased). Survivors: children Kenneth, Carl, Carol Thierer Prill, Sharon Visser; five grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 26 at Metamora, Ill.

Yoder, Clifford, 88, West Liberty, Ohio, died April 26. Spouse: Freda Hartzler Yoder (deceased). Parents: Lee and Clara Hilty Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Daniel, Wayne, Elvin, Duane, Edith Shore, Helen Metzger; 14 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 29 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.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- **Belleville Mennonite School** has teacher openings beginning August 2000: ***choral director and music teacher*** and ***high school science***. Please contact Ray Baker, Superintendent, P.O. Box 847, Belleville, PA 17004; 717-935-2184; email <bmsoffice@lcworkshop.com>.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 345) invites applications for the following teaching positions for 2000-01: ***6th grade, social studies 7 & 8, high school English, orchestra, Spanish, German*** (60-75%). Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <dueckak@hotmail.com>.

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School** and **Lancaster Mennonite Middle and High School** need a ***band and strings director***. Both positions could include teaching some other music classes and could be combined. Contact Richard Thomas at 717-299-0436 or email <thomasjr@lmhs.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite High School,** 801 Parkwood Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22802, has the following positions for the 2000-2001 school year: ***physical, health and driver education*** (full-time), ***instrumental music*** (70 percent), ***social sciences*** (20 percent) sociology and psychology.

  Fax resumes to J. David Yoder, Principal, 540-432-4528; or call 540-432-4502.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a ***middle school science teacher*** and an ***instrumental (band) teacher*** beginning in the 2000-2001 school year. Penn View serves 575 students K-8. Please send your resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 216-723-1196.

- **Sarasota Christian School,** Sarasota, Fla., is currently accepting applications for the 2000-01 school year for the following faculty positions: ***general math/science, Spanish, computer, literature/language arts, PE*** (elementary, MS, HS), ***girls varsity volleyball coach***. To request an application, email Delores Mead at <dmead@sarasotachristian.org>.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a candidate for the position of full-time ***youth pastor***. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. Located in southeastern Pa., Franconia has an exciting and growing jr. and sr. high youth program. Interested people should send resume to Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email <info@franconiamennonite.org>.

- **Pasadena Mennonite Church** seeks a half-time ***associate pastor in Christian education, pastoral care and small groups***. Applicants will share Anabaptist commitment and be skilled in facilitating the congregation to carry out its ministry in Southern California. Women and minorities encouraged to apply.

  Direct resume/inquiries to PMC Search Committee, 1041 N. Altadena Dr., Pasadena, CA 91107; email <PasaMenno@aol.com>. Applicant evaluation begins June 15.

- **Tucson Mennonite Voluntary Service** needs people committed to serving poor and marginalized, and desiring life in community. Current need: ***nurse*** (Spanish-speaking required), ***social workers*** (Spanish preferred), and ***home repair worker***. Hosted by Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, a vibrant community of faith that values and supports its MVSers.

  To learn more contact Gayle Alderfer Fisher at 520-747-0702; email <alder7run@juno.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church,** Edmonton, Alberta, is looking for an ***interim/transitional pastor*** to commence Sept. 1, 2000, for a 1- to 2-year term. We are a multigenerational urban congregation of 200+ members and adherents. The position would include spiritual leadership from the pulpit, worship leading and pastoral ministry. A major focus of this position would be to coordinate, with a committee, a pastoral needs assessment of the congregation.

  Please direct resumes, inquiries or nominations by June 30 to Adela Wedler, 1903-111 A Street, Edmonton, AB T6J 5L9; 780-437-1504; email <awedler@mail2.westworld.ca>.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies.

Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available.

To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Lancaster Mennonite Middle and High School** has the following openings: ***admissions counselor, director of development, girls and boys dorm advisers, part-time Spanish/French teacher***. Contact Richard Thomas at 717-299-0436 or email <thomasjr@lmhs.com>.

- **Sharing Programs Inc.,** Lancaster, Pa., a property/casualty mutual aid program, seeks ***department leader for finance/information systems***. Requires 5-10 yrs work experience in accounting, business and/or finance; bachelor's degree in same, info systems or related field; 3-5 yrs in management; knowledge of client/server and PC network technology. Insurance experience desirable. Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367; email <hr@splmc.com>. Visit <www.sharingprograms.com>.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center,** a K-8 multiracial, inner-city Christian elementary school, seeks applications for a full-time ***director of development***. Minimum requirement a bachelor's degree in business, marketing, communications, education or similar field. Marketing or development experience desirable. Seeking self-motivated individual with strong communication and organizational skills; sensitivity, respect and ability to relate to a diverse constituency; and a belief in the mission of CMLC. Applications will be accepted until August 1. Targeted starting date Sept. 18.

  Send letter of application and resume to Marvin Friesen, Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632. For more information call 773-735-9304.

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  Send resume and references to Roma J. Eicher, NCTM Administrator, 35355 Eicher Rd. SE, Albany, OR 97321. For more information phone 541-926-2975 or email <cmeroma@proaxis.com>.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** invites applications for the position of ***assistant principal***, beginning July 1, 2000. The assistant principal serves as assistant to the chief administrator for a growing school with 45 faculty and staff and current enrollment of 345 students in grades 6-12. Candidates should be people deeply committed to Christian faith as interpreted by the Mennonite Church and should possess a vision for Christian education. Responsibilities include overseeing the school's daily operations, student discipline, teacher supervision and leadership of the middle school program. Candidates should hold, or be prepared to obtain, administrative licensure in Indiana. Administrative experience is preferred.

  Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <dueckak@hotmail.com>.

- **Hesston College** seeks applicants for ***director of public relations***. The director works with admissions, alumni and development to produce Hesston's marketing literature. Responsibilities: supervise a designer and a student assistant, collaborate with a photographer/web content manager, write and distribute news releases/feature stories and produce internal publications in cooperation with a variety of departments. Qualifications: excellent writing and editing skills, background in print production, commitment to the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education. Bachelor's degree required, experience preferred. 10- to 12-month position.

  Send resume and references to Elam Peachey, Executive Vice President for Advancement, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8111 or email <elamp@hesston.edu>.

- **Goshen College** is offering ***environmental education internships***. Merry Lea Environmental Learning Center near Wolf Lake, Ind., affiliated with Goshen College, has openings for two interns for six months or one year starting July 2000. Opportunity to gain experience in environmental education while assisting in program delivery especially to K-12 students, curriculum design, land management and general public programs. Stipend available along with health insurance. B.A. required, preference for major in environmental studies, biology, elementary or environmental education. Experience in related areas also preferred.

  To apply, fill out personnel information form at <www.goshen.edu/employment/personl.html> or in person at human resources office at Goshen College. References required. Call Luke Gascho at 219-799-5869 or email <lukeag@goshen.edu> or call David Janzen at 219-535-7507 for more information. Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** seeks ***director of communications***. The director assumes broad responsibility for developing MCC's approach to communications and insures that material produced is consistent with that approach. The director participates in policy and other discussions to insure that such decisions are properly reflected in MCC communications. Qualifications for this position include organization/administrative ability, experience or training in an area of communications, such as writing/editing, audiovisual production, photography or graphic design. All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking. This is a three-year salaried or voluntary service position at the MCC binational headquarters in Akron, Pa. The last day to receive applications is June 2, 2000. Start date is as soon as possible.

  For more information or to receive job descriptions, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at MCC Human Resources, 717-859-1151; email <psd@mcc.org> or <gpk@mcc.org>.

by Rich Preheim

The run on race

While national attention has focused on South Carolina, where the NAACP is leading a boycott of the state because the Confederate flag flies above the capitol, people of faith have spoken out against racism in Denver and Minneapolis.

The leadership of the Episcopal Church, which will hold its triennial convention in Denver this summer, has scuttled plans for lodging and activities in an Adams Mark hotel because of allegations against the hotel chain of racial discrimination, according to *The Episcopal New Yorker.*

The U.S. Department of Justice has filed suit against Adams Mark in federal court, charging a broad pattern of racial discrimination in providing guest services. In a statement, the Episcopal Church Executive Council said pulling out of the Denver hotel "was the most appropriate response to the circumstances in light of the church's profound commitment to eradicating racism in our church and society."

Meanwhile, Lutheran-affiliated Augsburg College in Minneapolis is facing a lawsuit from an alumnus who wants his $500,000 contribution back. Elroy Stock made his donation in 1987 for a campus building project. But news later broke that he had sent thousands of letters to mixed-race couples advocating racial purity, reports *The Lutheran.* Augsburg declined to name the new facility after Stock, prompting the lawsuit. The college denies it ever agreed to put Stock's name on the building his money helped finance.

War tax resisters' day in court

The U.S. Supreme Court has shut out war tax resisters this year, dismissing three cases of Quakers who, in order not to financially support military efforts, have withheld income tax payments. In all three cases, the government argued, were these cases to succeed, they would have opened the floodgates for other tax resisters, according to a news release from the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund.

In the most recent case, the court declined to hear the case of Rosa Covington Packard of Greenwich, Conn. For the past 18 years, she has withheld all her income tax and placed it an escrow account maintained by the local Quaker meeting. Two years ago Packard requested that the government waive the penalties imposed by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

In her case before the Supreme Court, Packard argued that the government, not the taxpayer, bears the burden of proof in a case involving an infringement of free exercise of religion. Also, she claimed, the IRS needs to prove that the tax system cannot accommodate her reasons for nonpayment when the agency accommodates others.

Earlier this year, the court also dismissed cases brought by Quaker war tax resisters Edith and Gordon Browne of New Hampshire and Priscilla Lippincott Adams of New Jersey.

Conversion experience

The Christians have converted at North Carolina's Elon College. For nearly 80 years, the sports teams at the United Church of Christ-affiliated school had been known as the Fightin' Christians. That changed May 9, when Elon announced the Phoenix as its new athletic nickname.

The reason for the change, says *Sports Illustrated,* was confusion. Fightin' Christians implied that Elon, a progressive, liberal arts college, was more like conservative religious schools such as Jerry Falwell's Liberty University. "I've had anxious parents of prospective Jewish students see the nickname and pull me aside to ask, 'What does this mean?' " says Nan Perkins, Elon's former admissions director.

The Fightin' Christians originated with a 1921 football game between Elon and neighboring Guilford, a Quaker college. A sportswriter described the game as the Christians vs. the Quakers. The new name is also based in the 1920s, describing Elon's rebirth following a 1923 fire that decimated the campus.

Tidbits

- An average of 6,000 Europeans and North Americans leave the Christian faith each day. —*The Other Side*
- The first woman ordained as a Protestant minister was Antoinette Blackwell in the Congregational Church in 1853.—*Holiness Today*
- There are 100 million charismatic Catholics worldwide.—*Christian-Week*

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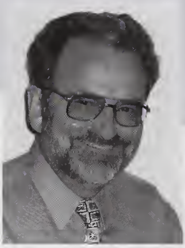


J. Lorne Peachey

Well-aged wine and choice beef

The Lord Almighty will spread a wonderful feast for everyone around the world. It will be a delicious feast of good food, with clear, well-aged wine and choice beef.—Isaiah 25:6 NLT

Why is it so difficult to get a discussion going about heaven among North American Mennonites these days? Is it because most of us are so well off? About the best we can do is agree that streets of gold don't hold much appeal. We also do little with Ascension Day, the 40th day following Easter that commemorates Jesus' return to heaven. Ascension Day, which this year falls on June 1, is no longer even a blip on Mennonite church calendars.

Once it was. As a boy growing up on a farm in central Pennsylvania, I remember Ascension Day as a holiday. There was church in the morning, when we sang about heaven and listened to sermons about eternity (though by the time I was a teen even that had disappeared). Ascension Day was a time for relaxing and eating—and, best of all for me, not doing farm work.

Were we less earthbound 50 years ago because that generation had vivid memories of the Great Depression, when one was aware of the finiteness of life and the fact that you couldn't even be sure of your next meal? By contrast, in this day of macadam and 24-hour Wal-Marts, it's difficult for us to dream of heaven with streets of gold and no night. Even Isaiah's image of "a wonderful feast" has limited appeal with a McDonald's on every corner and an all-you-can-eat seafood buffet every Friday night.

The fact that heaven is in our future should allow us to relax. Someday we will understand. Someday we will be able to do it right and figure it all out.

But check out Isaiah's description of the atmosphere for this banquet. "In that day he will remove the cloud of gloom, the shadow of death that hangs over the earth" (Isaiah 25:7). Here is something to which we can relate.

We live in a world with more than enough gloom. Earlier this month yet another racially motivated shooting took five lives in a Pittsburgh suburb. Wars continue around the world; rumors of more are reported almost every day. A growing number of television shows have me wondering just how much more debauchery, hedonism and narcissism can be explored.

Death—or our fear of it—is also pervasive. Ads on the evening news are one example. I'm struck by their appeals to keeping young, taking away our pain and making us forget our fear of being no more.

The church is not exempt from gloom either. "Crisis" is a word I hear used more and more these days to describe the Mennonite church. These are turbulent times in which old moorings seem to be crumbling while new ones are not yet in place.

"Don't be afraid." That's what Jesus told his disciples under similar circumstances. When their world seemed to be falling apart, Jesus reassured them they could get beyond their fears because of what is in store for eternity. "When everything is ready, I will come and get you," he promised (John 14:3).

One temptation the church has faced through the centuries is to allow this promise of heaven to make believers lazy about their work on earth. Today, however, our temptation is the opposite. In our zeal to bring God's kingdom to earth, we forget that the future is not ours to control, nor is it brought about solely through our efforts.

Because we have heaven in our future, we don't always have to be right. We don't have to despair when our best efforts are not good enough. And we can give up our obsession with understanding the why of every situation.

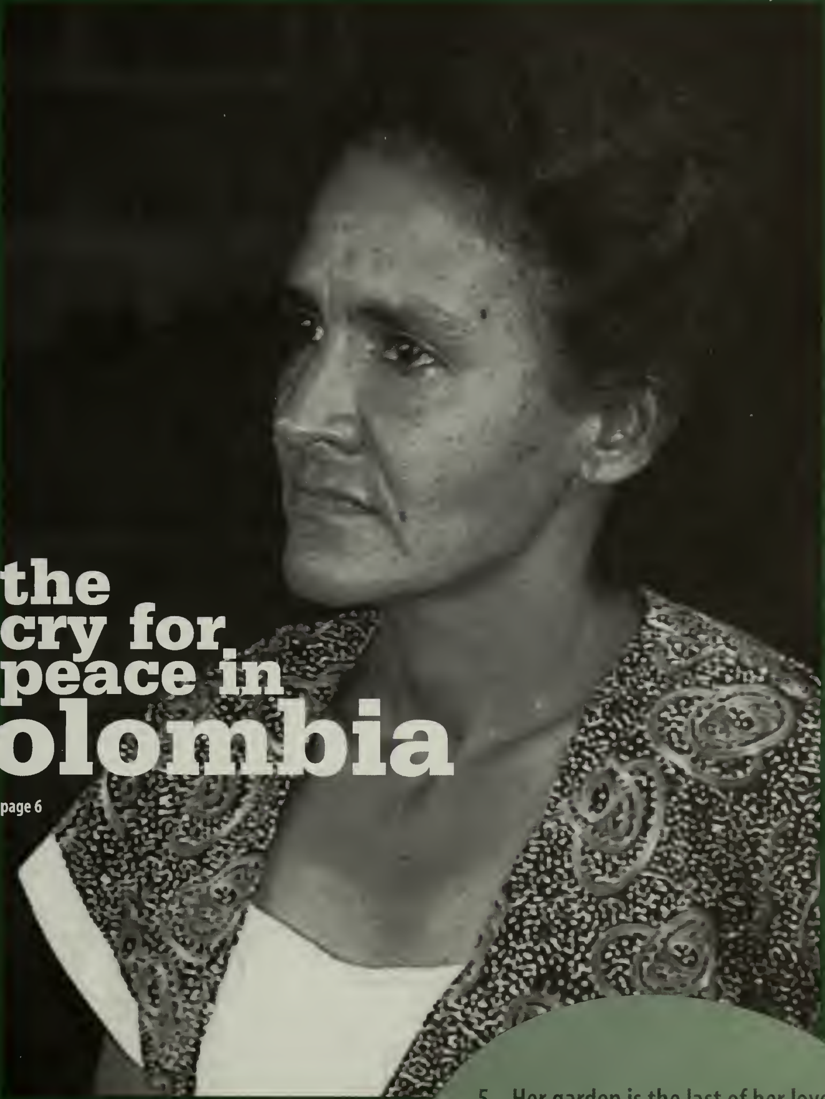
In short, the fact of heaven should allow us to relax. Someday we will understand. Someday we will be able to do it right. Out of a church situation that also had difficult problems, the apostle Paul wrote: "Now we see things imperfectly as in a poor mirror, but then we will see everything with perfect clarity" (1 Corinthians 13:12).

I look forward to that day. Even Isaiah's image of well-aged wine and choice beef can't begin to describe what heaven will be like. As Christians, we have already begun an eternity we can truly celebrate this Ascension Day. And every day.—*jlp*

No issue next week: The next regularly scheduled issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated June 6.

the Mennonite

June 6, 2000



the cry for peace in Colombia

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11 MCC shipment finally bound for Iraq
20 Don't you know that your body is a temple?

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Weighing in on a third way

In talking about Tony and Peggy Campolo's disagreement over homosexuality, Richard Kauffman raises a striking question ("A Third Way Between Fight and Flight," May 2): Should the Campolos get a divorce or stay together? Marriage vows are about staying together no matter what the circumstances. There is no exception clause dealing with the possibility the same God would lead each partner to a different understanding of the Bible. Yet how can they continue in the most intimate relationship with this especially divisive disagreement?

Looking at church history, we should not be surprised that individuals have different leadings in one congregation, congregations in one conference, conferences in one denomination and denominations in the Christian church. What we do in most of these situations is make our own leading clear while emphasizing our unity in Christ, keeping in conversation and mutual encouragement and busying ourselves with the mission to which God has called us.

I think the devil smiles, even instigates and encourages, as we go against Jesus' prayer for unity by insisting that oneness means being led the same. I see the Campolos fulfilling their marriage vows and answering Jesus' prayer. May their example go before us.—*Darrel Hostetler, Goshen, Ind.*

Amen to Kauffman. There has been so much jabbing and mean-spiritedness by so many regarding homosexuality and church membership. Finally someone has the knowledge and spirit of diplomatic intervention to hopefully bring us to our senses.—*Dan Baumgartner, Versailles, Mo.*

Kauffman states that he is not willing to be part of a church that is defined by one issue. Neither am I. As I see it, a more basic principle is at stake: Is the Bible a reliable guide for ethical and moral standards? As our culture becomes increasingly secularized, there will be more unforeseen sticky issues coming our way. The church will repeatedly be called upon to choose whether to follow society's standards or to courageously remain true to God's Word.

Are we to understand that the Bible is not authoritative on moral and ethical matters when "new understandings" are discovered? If the Bible is mistaken in those areas that can be confirmed or denied by critical analysis, the skeptic may well question whether it has validity regarding spiritual revelation.

Fortunately, I believe the overwhelming majority of Mennonites are still betting their lives on the trustworthiness of God's Holy Book.—*Abraham K. Gehman, Bally, Pa.*

Kauffman puts the question straight: Can we agree that "God's intention for sexuality" is monogamous heterosexuality? Many of us can't agree with such dictums. Every time I have witnessed the process of "discerning God's will," I have noticed that the results have an uncanny tendency to favor the best immediate interests of those who are sitting comfortably in authoritative, status quo-approved positions.

I believe that the "sexual holiness" shared by two people can be measured by how much love, respect and commitment is present in their relationship, regardless of their sexual orientations, and that the church should be proud to recognize the sanctity of these three qualities. The concept of "congregations of refuge," while perhaps a clean solution to this divisive problem, seems to me a glorified way of saying to homosexuals, "We won't kick you out of the neighborhood, but please don't get too close to my backyard." I fail to see anything Christian in this stance.

Those of us who sign petitions and participate in campaigns on this issue do so because we believe the church can and should take a lead in dissolving prejudice and fear rather than wallowing in the same ills that afflict so much of our society. As a young and discouraged Mennonite, I want my message to be heard and considered: A church that tolerates this injustice is not a church in which I am happy.—*Stephanie Krehbiel, East Lansing, Mich.*

Kauffman brings some creative ideas into the conversation about how conferences might deal with congregations who accept homosexual people as members. The idea of "congregations of refuge" deserves discussion and consideration.

But I am offended by Kauffman's request "that we agree that, even though we don't really understand what causes homosexuality, it is part of the woundedness of God's creation." I read this a few days after celebrating the birthday of our oldest child. She has been a wonderful gift to me and to her family. She is lesbian, and she is a whole person, committed to following Christ, committed to doing the will of God. She is not an expression of woundedness any more than I as a heterosexual woman am a part of the woundedness of God's creation.

I long for the day when lesbians and gay men

theMennonite

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y readers say

can be accepted by the Christian church as part of God's beautiful creation, a special gift to all of us, just as those who are left-handed are also a unique gift to us. They have choices to make, as we all do, as to whether they can with authenticity live out the story God created them to write. We make that choice more difficult by telling them that if they live out that story with integrity, they can no longer be part of our church. To label them "wounded" perpetuates a painful stigma experienced by gays and lesbians and their families.—*Lois Kenagy, Albany, Ore.*

Kauffman has some good ideas on how to deal with the differences between people. But to suggest that there be "congregations of refuge" that accept practicing homosexuals is opening the door to sin in the church. The cities of refuge were established so a person who accidentally killed someone would be safe until the person could be judged. The cities were not to condone or justify the person.—*Dean Swartzendruber, Kalona, Iowa*

Do we want a "congregation of refuge" where homosexuals can flee instead of dealing with this sin the way sin needs to be dealt with? I have an admiration for and trust in people who can state what they believe even if this results in persecution or death. But when Kauffman ends his article with "I may have this all wrong or some parts of it wrong," I feel uneasy. Which part of this article does he feel he has wrong? —*Helen Lepp, Rivers, Man.*

If we need "congregations of refuge" for practicing homosexuals, do we then also need "congregations of refuge" for practicing drunkards, robbers, greedy swindlers, etc.?—*Ephraim Nafziger, Lititz, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Kryss Chupp

Pursuit of unity

Thanks to Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp for their challenging article "Regaining the Initiative" (May 16). Throughout the General Conference Mennonite Church-Mennonite Church transformation discussions, I have constantly been brought to 2 Corinthians 8-9, where Paul struggles to collect a gift for the poverty-stricken church in Jerusalem. He writes, "I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance" (2 Corinthians 8:13-14 NRSV).

> If we are to regain the initiative, we … must confess our weaknesses, failures, impatience, ignorance, arrogance, self-satisfaction, self-righteousness, prejudices and indifference to the divine call to unity.
>
> *—Robert S. Kreider and John A. Lapp, "Regaining the Initiative," May 16*

On Feb. 13, I worshiped with the Oboke Hill Mennonite congregation near Shirati, Tanzania. One mile down the hill I saw the hospital where, two nights before, I witnessed three children die of malaria. About 50 yards before me was the foundation of the church building this group of believers was hoping to build. Since most of them earn the minimum wage of $25 a month, the prospect of collecting the $1,200 needed to build the church building looked bleak, but they expressed faith in God to supply their needs. You see, we were worshiping under a tree.

Kreider and Lapp aptly quote Jonathan Larson that "the unity we ache for will grow not out of doctrinal agreement but out of a common witness of shared mission and service." In this period of prosperity enjoyed by many Mennonites in North America, would it not be appropriate to lay aside our doctrinal differences and seek unity in service: sharing our living faith and material gifts with the other half of our Mennonite church scattered throughout the world? Believe me, there is not a fair balance in the worldwide Mennonite church; we're not even close. Should we not follow Paul's life and words on this matter?*—Stan Godshall, Mount Joy, Pa.*

I am grateful for the wisdom and Christian spirit that is evident throughout Kreider and Lapp's article. The call for confession and repentance, coupled with the challenge to celebrate histories and cultures, is a wonderful way of reminding us of how this is a basis of exercising our faith in moving toward unity.

The accompanying story on "Impasse and Resolution" illustrated well that we have faced similar difficulties before. Too often we have thought that breaking away and being separate was the way of being pure. Canadian Mennonites are facing similar challenges to our way of expressing our unity. I think the recent papal apology is a challenge and an example of that as well. In humility we also need to acknowledge that we do not ever fully know the will of God. The call for love and unity can help us to move in that direction. Thank you for a thoughtful article on the unity discussion. *—Peter H. Peters, Winnipeg*

Kreider and Lapp's article was like an oasis for my mind and soul. It left me feeling refreshed and clean after having read many letters and articles about the transformation process that left me feeling troubled and soiled.*—Elda Bachman, North Newton, Kan.*

Chair's decision

I would like to thank Alonna Gautsche Sprunger for her letter in the April 11 issue about the use of the term "wheelchair-bound" in the story about me in the March 21 issue ("First Wheelchair-Bound MVSer Rolls On"). I feel Sprunger's letter is a good start to a discussion that should be happening in society and in our church. I would also like to present another point of view as to why those words were used.

I was given an advance copy of the article to proofread to make sure it was as accurate a possible. I feel that the term "wheelchair-bound" is an appropriate one. Yes, my wheelchair does give me more mobility, and I can go places I never could have without it. But I am bound by it. Buildings without ramps, public rest rooms with no accessible stalls, sandy beaches and stores with narrow rows are all off-limits because of my chair. I get lost in crowds because everyone is taller than me, top shelves are impossible and uneven, broken sidewalks are difficult to maneuver.

Until the whole world is 100 percent handicapped accessible, I am bound by my wheelchair. That is why I felt the use of "wheelchair-bound" was, and still is, accurate and appropriate.*—Abigail A. Smith, San Antonio*

Hands and feet

As pastor of the imperfect church that Ted Lewis talked about ("The Goodness of Imperfection," April 11), I assure Dennis Gingerich —who took issue with Lewis' statement in a letter in the May 9 issue—that I honor the congregation in Cape Coral, Fla., as maybe an eye or a hand in the body of Christ. In comparison, we in rural Kansas are perhaps a foot or a toe. Just as we often think of a local congregation as the body of Christ with many members, so can we think of our coming-together denomination as the body of Christ with many different members. My testimony is, "In my weakness, God is strong."*—Muriel T. Stackley, Pawnee Rock, Kan.*

Her garden is the last of her love

by John Grey

When it doesn't rain,
there's always the sprinklers.
She lives between the extremes

of water now. Rhododendron
and azaleas flourish and sometimes
it's God's will but mostly her sweat

and patience. Her husband slouches
before the television. She digs in
the soil. He gradually surrenders

his details to the comfort of
the couch, the sleeping pill
of television. He's the one

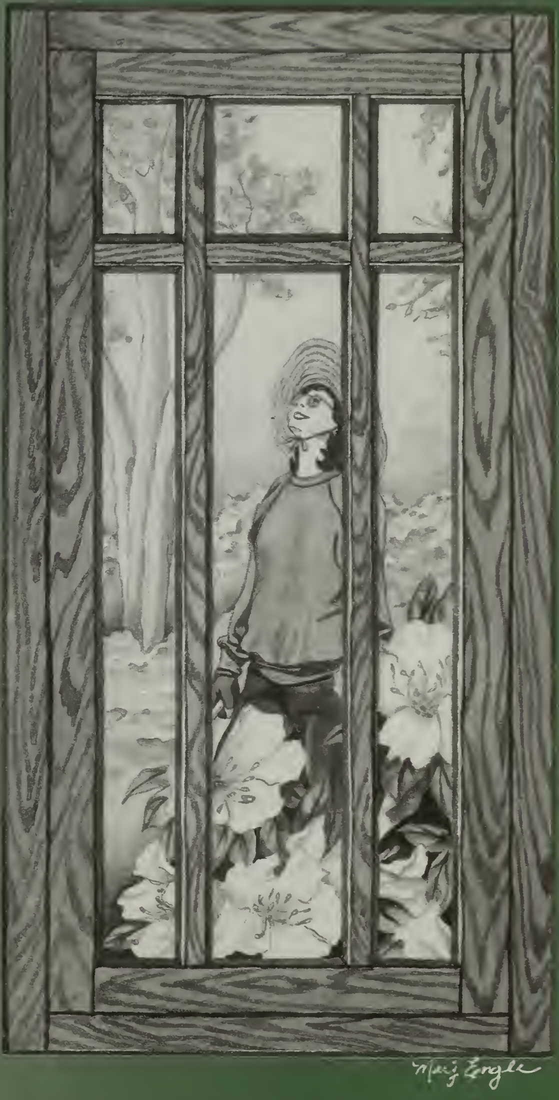
weed she hasn't bothered to pluck.
She shares the burden of
seed, its thirst for water, for

light, the way it bursts through
the blackness, stands tall in
the sun. Its greatest successes

climb up on their own green
backbones, press their petaled faces
against the parlor window,

flutter in the brusque wind of his snores.

John Grey lives in Providence, R.I.



Colombia cries out for peace

by Kathleen Kern

As our Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation met with evangelical Christians at a small church in a sweltering, tropical region of Colombia in April, a Presbyterian pastor said to us, “If there were 50,000 people in the street every time a pastor were killed, the devil himself would tremble.”

Dozens of pastors and church workers have been killed in this region over the last few years in a variety of gruesome ways without anyone taking much notice. Paramilitaries decapitated one and used his head for a football. Juan,* our host for this trip, told us how another pastor was killed in his church while he was preaching. Armed intruders ordered the congregation to leave, then they set the chapel on fire. The pastor asked the gunmen to wait to kill him so that he could pray for them first. Juan began weeping as he described how another friend, a large man whose bear hugs could be a little painful, was later shot.

After these killings, the pastors in the area decided they needed to meet to discuss how they should respond. When Juan came to the meeting the next week, he saw the pastors looking distraught. “Why are you crying?” he asked. “Christ loves you!”

While the world’s attention was fixed on Kosovo this last year, Colombia was undergoing a crisis of similar proportions. As many as 2 million people have been driven from their homes as a result of fighting between guerrillas, the Colombian army and state-sanctioned paramilitary groups.

“Haven’t you heard?” they said. Yet another pastor—the one in charge of organizing the meeting—had been assassinated the night before. The leaders of the denominations represented by this group of pastors refused to come visit the region because they feared it was too dangerous, but somehow the fax that Juan had sent them was passed along to JustaPaz—a peace and human rights organization started by the Colombia Mennonite Church. Ricardo Esquivia, director of JustaPaz, came out to visit and offer support.

Kryss Chupp, CPT

Thousands of refugees: A displaced mother in Magangue, Colombia, holds onto her baby.

In 1997, when guerrillas and paramilitaries displaced thousands of people in the area, Juan came to the coliseum in town and saw about 2,000 refugees there. It was a hot day, and the children were crying for water. Juan sent more faxes to the leaders of his Pentecostal denomination and to evangelical members of Colombia’s congress. The congresspeople either did not respond or told him that the displaced people were probably full of “infiltrators.” His denominational leaders told him not to worry about the refugees—the government and the Red Cross would take care of them.

Crying for water: That night, he closed himself in his room and started praying. When he lay down in his bed, the sounds of children crying for water would not let him sleep. Finally, he said, “Lord, they are your displaced. Put in my path someone who will help me, because I am alone.” The next day, Juan received a telephone call from Ricardo, asking him to come to Bogotá. He left Colombia’s capital city with two truckloads of food and clothing from JustaPaz and Mennonite Central Committee.

Because of the support of Colombian Mennonites, Juan has taken to calling himself a “Mennocostal.”

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* Names of certain people, denominations and locations have been disguised in this article to protect threatened church workers.

We don't need arms. We need blood for the wounded. We need food for the hungry. We need houses for the displaced.—*an evangelical pastor*

las, the Colombian army and state-sanctioned paramilitary groups. About 30,000 people die violently in Colombia each year—15 percent for political reasons and the rest from a criminal violence that the government authorities and nonoperational judicial system are unwilling or unable to stop. Some say the law applies only to poor people. It protects those who commit massacres and massive land thefts while jailing the powerless for small infractions.

In this violent milieu, the Colombian Mennonites struggle to be salt and light, to regard defiantly each human life as valuable, to understand how their small church can follow the nonviolent Jesus when the armed groups around them are escalating the decades-old civil war.

Would-be assassins: Because of their human-rights and peace-promoting works, Colombian Mennonites have been targeted by armed groups on both the left and right. For safety's sake, some church leaders have left the country for periods of time. Others have taken precautions such as sleeping in different locations periodically and varying their routines so that would-be assassins will not know when they are likely to be in certain places.

A Mennonite lawyer who has tried, despite threats on his life, to prosecute people responsible for massacres has refused offers by the government to send armed guards with him when he conducts investigations. "I detest arms, and I am not going to use things that I detest for personal protection," he said. When the CPT delegation asked about unarmed bodyguards such as those who work with Peace Brigades International, the lawyer commended their good work but said that having fellow Christians as bodyguards would be even better because they could pray for him as they accompanied him. In our delegation's talks with Colombian Mennonites and other evangelicals, two themes kept cropping up:

1. Colombian Christians have felt abandoned by their fellow Christians around the world. One of the members of the Colombia Mennonite Church executive committee began weeping as he described the heavy burden that the church has borne alone for so long. Another member of the committee said he did not know which was worse—the actual violence he had to face on a day-to-day basis or being told by Christians from the outside who are unwilling to help that Colombia is a violent place.

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Kryss Chupp, CPT

CPT delegation member Jose Luis Azurdia, a Guatemalan Mennonite (center), talks with people displaced by violence in Magangue, Colombia.

Colombia cries out
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Kryss Chupp, CPT

Placed in the path: Ricardo Esquivia (left), director of JustaPaz, with a local pastor from Magangue, Colombia

Wherever sin is abundant, grace is also abundant.

—Ricardo Esquivia

2. All the church people we spoke to from various political persuasions were unified in their opposition to the $1.6 billion in aid to Colombia attached to a U.S. Senate appropriations bill for 2001. All but $3 million of the package will go to the Colombian military—ostensibly to fight narcotics traffic. The package stipulates that the drug-growing regions of Colombia controlled by one of the main guerrilla groups, the FARC, will be sprayed with defoliation chemicals. The drug growing and transporting areas in the north of the country, controlled mainly by paramilitary groups, will not be touched.

"We don't need arms," said an evangelical pastor meeting with the CPT delegation. "We need blood for the wounded. We need food for the hungry. We need houses for the displaced. We need tools to work. We need money to invest in people who do not have education."

Sanctuaries of peace: Regardless of whether they receive support from the outside, Colombian Mennonites will continue their work to legalize conscientious objection, to help people displaced by violence, to preach peace in an overwhelmingly violent context, to create sanctuaries of peace where members of congregations will be trained in nonviolence and where people seeking to leave armed groups will be safe.

"Wherever sin is abundant," Ricardo Esquivia told the delegation, "grace is also abundant."

Kathleen Kern lives in Webster, N.Y., and is a long-term worker for Christian Peacemaker Teams.

The struggle fo

by Bonnie Klassen

I am not superwoman, nor do I always possess an eternal hope. When I visit vast settlements of displaced people, I sometimes lose all strength while gazing into their desperate, forgotten faces. They look at my well-fed, clean, North American body and hope that if I snap my fingers, miraculously their skeleton lives might grow new flesh. I long to see their nakedness covered with dignity, but I can do little to change the past.

Then I listen to the chilling description of recent massacres in the state of Sucre. Trucks arrived at the main square and armed men—paramilitaries—scrambled out, waving machetes. With cold efficiency they killed 70 men, women and children in short order. The military generals insisted that these unfortunate civilian deaths came as a result of combat between guerrillas and paramilitaries. Funny how such fierce combat could have occurred without anyone hearing even one gunshot.

When the head chief of the paramilitary forces appeared in a televised interview and showed the country his face for the first time, I felt like I had encountered evil. Here was the man responsible for 1,000 torturous deaths last year alone—the person who tried to snuff out the light of my friends' lives. I shuddered with anger as he talked about his daily habit of reading the Old Testament and how he felt content with the fact that he had never killed an innocent person. Yet when I looked into his eyes, I saw no monster but only a human being, apparently much like me. Suddenly my concept of grace fell into crisis. I talk about unlimited grace, but does it really reach this far? These images leave me with many questions and in even greater awe of a God who has a passion for forgiveness.

Daily, my trembling heart cries out to God, How long? Yet somehow I remain convinced that those of us who seek a new kingdom will find our heart's desire. Indeed, the first glimpses are already visible, though at times hard to see. I see the signs in people who live under the shadow of death but still seek truth and love their

hope in Colombia

neighbors. They refuse to believe that we must survive by attacking and manipulating in order to protect ourselves. They risk vulnerability and build the blessing of community.

I see the signs of a kingdom made for children in friends who allow themselves to be considered foolish in a world that pressures for perfection. I see hints of a new kingdom in the humility of leaders who do not betray their people by bowing down to the country's handful of economic barons. These remarkable people choose to serve rather than seek personal glory, and so they receive a warm, understanding embrace from nail-scarred hands. Each member of this community of light offers a distinct reflection of the new world, and together they become catalysts of change, actors of redemption.

Candelaria had invested her entire adult life in offering health care to communities abandoned by the state. Her passion for the people led paramilitary groups to believe that she was a guerrilla. She tried to explain, but once little slips of paper printed with her obituary began to appear under the door, explanations no longer mattered. All that mattered was escaping—now. She and her two young boys straggled into Cartagena from the mountains with no money and no suitcase. They set up a small shack among 400 other families who had fled from the war.

Candelaria cried in the morning upon surveying her tiny dark hovel. Then she laughed in the afternoon at her own complaints. It's ridiculous to have a bigger home if you have no possessions, she said. When the police destroyed their houses, they slept under the stars. The bright sky inspired them to keep on dreaming of a world at peace, a society of justice. Someday. Tomorrow, she said, they would build a new house, that's all. This, too, could be broken down or washed away by a landslide, but her courage and hope do not shake. She is a light that shines on the path toward a new future.

This community of struggling saints instills hope and strengthens my faith to see that these tiny buds of change will flourish, while the violent, selfish, arrogant people of this age are merely falling, dried-up leaves. The buds of spring are growing everywhere for those who have eyes to see. When I am horrified by these darkest moments of death, I know I can begin looking for a resurrection.

Bonnie Klassen works with JustaPaz, a peace and justice ministry of the Colombia Mennonite Church. JustaPaz creates and distributes education about nonviolent alternatives within the context of the world's most violent country. A Kitchener, Ont., native, she is jointly appointed as a mission volunteer by Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

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COM

Bonnie Klassen juggles two phones in her work with JustaPaz in Colombia.

Membership plan: 'Everybody in' is out

New proposal gets nod from majority of CLC members

KANSAS CITY, Kan.—In a 180-degree switch from a previous plan, the congregations and area conferences now composing the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) will need to apply for membership in the new Mennonite Church USA, according to a proposal that has received assent from the majority of the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC).

The guidelines, drafted by a CLC committee, is the second attempt to create a plan for determining membership in Mennonite Church USA. A committee appointed by the GC, MC and Conference of Mennonites in Canada executive committees had earlier proposed that all current members automatically become members of the new denomination. That included dual-conference congregations that had been disciplined by MC area conferences over homosexuality but still held full GC membership. That provision, which was approved for Mennonite Church Canada, has died since last summer's U.S. delegate assembly in St. Louis amid charges that it was soft on homosexuality.

Under the new proposal, current GC and MC conferences and congregations that "share … vision and commitments" may join Mennonite Church USA. Those positions include the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and denominational statements, particularly the MC Purdue and GC Saskatoon statements on sexuality.

A supporting document accompanying the new guidelines states that disciplined dual-conference congregations "must clarify their willingness to support" the guidelines in order to join Mennonite Church USA. The document also states that pastors "are expected to uphold the wider church's discernment as the teaching points of the church" or risk disciplinary action.

The proposal received majority support at its first hearing, during the CLC's May 24-25 gathering. The nearly 100 participants, representing all area conferences and associate groups, discussed the proposal in table groups before making brief summary reports to the entire group. No votes or polls were taken to quantify or identify support for the measure.

"It sounds like the majority would be more likely to affirm this set of membership guidelines," said Ervin Stutzman, who, as Mennonite Church USA moderator-elect, is CLC chair.

But he also cautioned the meeting that the prevailing support in the council not ignore dissenting views. Of the 23 U.S. area conferences, four are GC and two are dually affiliated. Subsequently, the CLC is predominantly MC.

One area of the guidelines that generated concerns from a minority of CLC members was the process of approving applications for Mennonite Church USA membership. In the new guidelines, as in the old, congregations hold denominational membership through membership in area conferences. The conferences are given authority for accepting or rejecting congregations; Mennonite Church USA, in turn, is given authority for accepting or rejecting conferences. But the proposal does not spell out who at the denominational level would be responsible for approving membership applications.

Western District Conference representative Marv Zehr noted his conference's dealings with member congregation Rainbow Mennonite Church in Kansas City, which is a part of the Supportive Congregations Network. He said Western District and Rainbow could develop a relationship that, in their eyes, would meet the membership guidelines' criteria. But who decides if that is good enough for the conference to join the denomination?

"That's a crucial piece for us [in determining] whether or not we're part of Mennonite Church USA," Zehr said.

In the next couple of weeks, the guidelines will be sent to GC and MC delegates to next year's convention in Nashville, Tenn. They will be asked to provide feedback in time for the CLC's next meeting in September. The membership guidelines need to be finalized by next spring for action at Nashville, where passage will require a two-thirds vote by each delegate body.

Several participants encouraged conferences to make preliminary decisions to join Mennonite Church USA prior to Nashville, then make a final decision after the convention if the membership guidelines are adopted. A number of participants also called for a temporary provisional membership status, giving conferences anywhere from six to 18 months after Nashville to consider next steps based on the convention's outcomes.—*Rich Preheim*

Mission document energizes CLC

While membership dominated the Constituency Leaders Council's (CLC) May 24-25 meeting, it was not the only item on the agenda. And a number of members were thankful for that.

The nearly 100 meeting participants spent the May 24 evening session with a rough draft of "Vision, Strategy and Organization of the Mission Agencies of the Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA." In contrast to the membership issue, several CLC members said they were energized by the mission discussion.

"It is my prayer that the mission agenda may soon overtake us all, … and we'll be dealing here with the results and implications of being a people of mission," said Owen Burkholder from Virginia Conference.

The mission document is being compiled by a Mission Transformation Project Team.

The meeting, held at Kansas City, Kan., was the CLC's second since being created at St. Louis 99. Not a decision-making body, it is a forum for representatives from all General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church area conferences and associate groups.—*Rich Preheim*

After six-month delay, U.S. government approves MCC shipment of hospital equipment to Iraq

WINNIPEG—It took a frustrating and life-endangering six months, but the U.S. government has finally given Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) permission to ship a load of hospital equipment to Iraq.

The equipment, including beds, cabinets, over-bed tables and nurse uniforms, will go to a much-needed pediatric hospital in Karbala, southwest of Baghdad, built by MCC and the Islamic Relief Agency. The hospital ward was completed months ago, but it couldn't be used until the beds arrived.

"We can honestly say that this delay has cost the lives of some Iraqi children," says Fay Foster, who with her husband, Greg, is MCC representative for Iraq and Jordan.

MCC appealed to donors last August for medical equipment for Iraq, then in October applied to the Treasury Department to send the humanitarian aid to Iraq. A 40-foot container is now en route via ship to Jordan. From there it will be trucked to Karbala. The shipment is expected to arrive by the end of June.

Kevin King, MCC material resources manager, said the U.S. government seemed to be concerned that three Bennet ventilators in the shipment could have military uses, something he doesn't deem possible. The ventilators are designed to ventilate critically ill neo-natal and pediatric babies.

"Unfortunately, we've been noticing a pattern of increasing delay on receiving a favorable response," King says.

For the past several months, the container sat sealed and ready to go at MCC's material resources warehouse in Ephrata, Pa., frustrating MCC workers and partners in Iraq.

"Every day we were hearing reports of how the U.S. government was fast-tracking humanitarian goods, and yet here were our hospital beds taking six months to get their approval," says Greg Foster. "It is just not right or just."

In the meantime, families have had to travel nine miles to the nearest children's hospital. The taxi fare alone costs more than a doctor's monthly wage. "For this reason, children have died," Fay Foster says.

This is the first time MCC has sent medical equipment to Iraq. But MCC officials say they have never experienced such a long waiting period for approval for other shipments to Iraq. Over the years, millions of dollars worth of medicine, food, seeds and school kits have been sent to the country, which has been hobbled by a United Nations embargo since the Persian Gulf War.—*MCC News Service*

We can honestly say that this delay has cost the lives of some Iraqi children

—Fay Foster

MDS to continue N.C. hurricane response

BURGAW, N.C.—After repairing 18 homes in flood-wrecked communities surrounding Burgaw, Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) has decided to extend its response to last September's Hurricane Floyd.

MDS had planned to close the project on May 29 but reconsidered in light of a flood of pleas for help. "We were winding down in Burgaw," says project director Bob Weichman. "Now we are cranking up again. There is so much need."

Community residents say the shock of the disaster paralyzed them, preventing them from seeking assistance. "When you are going through something like this, you don't think clearly," says Bert Pickett, a recipient of MDS aid. "You are, like, in a dream."

That dream state was enhanced by a general misunderstanding of how to apply for federal help. Some homeowners did not even realize that they needed or qualified for help. Because the extent of damage was not immediately visible in their homes, they ignored their own damp insulation. But with time, minor damages became harder to ignore as dampness turned to mold, joists began to rot and walls shifted from their foundations.

MDS photo by Ted Houser

Mennonite Disaster Service volunteers Lemuel Yutzy (front) and Api Rempel install a window in the new MDS dining hall in Burgaw, N.C. MDS has extended the Burgaw project for a year.

"Some are finding now that their floors are puckered up," says Rosie Judge, who is now living in a camper with her family. "The water didn't come in the house, but it came up under it."

Volunteers are framing in a pavilion to be used as a kitchen and dining hall facility for eight youth groups that will come to Burgaw this summer as part of MDS's summer youth program.—*Ted Houser of MDS News Service*

For better and for worse, mission worker in Japan finds chances to witness by performing weddings

KOBE, Japan—Mission workers are always looking for opportunities to witness to their faith and the Christian message. Even at weddings.

Russell Sawatsky, a worker in Kobe with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, began officiating at Japanese weddings a year ago.

"A friend of mine, Reimer Clausen, an independent, self-supporting missionary from Winnipeg, was scheduled to do a wedding … but had already made plans to return to Canada several days earlier," Sawatsky says. "He called me to ask whether I knew of anybody willing to fill in.

"[I was] looking to expand on my own role as a missionary, [so] I volunteered."

Since then, Sawatsky has officiated 34 weddings. Only 1 percent of Japanese are estimated to be Christians. Yet church weddings have become popular among nonbelievers. Sawatsky says a number of Japanese celebrities have gotten married according to church rites.

"[Church weddings] are seen as romantic and the thing to do," he says.

Sawatsky explains that traditional Japanese weddings are done according to Shinto rites, which are ancient, use archaic language and allow for only a relatively small number of guests. Then there is the bride's attire.

"The hat that the bride wears is said to cover the female demon's horns and thus fool the groom," Sawatsky says. "Not a very romantic connotation.

"Western weddings, by contrast, allow for a larger number of guests—friends as well as family. The language used is modern Japanese."

The desire for a contemporary wedding ceremony thus gives Christian ministers opportunity to share a Christian understanding of marriage. "Probably very few [Japanese] have ever been in a Christian worship service," Sawatsky says. "This, as I see it, provides a unique opportunity for witness at an important point in people's lives."

But that opportunity is limited. "For one thing, in the arrangement I am in now, there is no opportunity for any meetings with the couple prior to the wedding except for a brief rehearsal," Sawatsky says. "It doesn't make for an in-depth witness.

"However, it does give me and other Christian ministers a chance to say something about what Christian marriage means to up to 75 people at a time, people who have probably never heard a Christian say anything to them before about anything."

GCMC-MBM photo

Russell Sawatsky, a worker in Japan with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions, with a couple he married earlier this year. Even though only 1 percent of the country is Christian, more and more Japanese are getting married in Christian weddings. Sawatsky has officiated 34 weddings, which has given him new opportunities to witness.

Through Clausen, Sawatsky was able to contract with a company that provides ministers and musicians for Christian weddings. "They could hire what the owner/manager referred to as 'talent pastors,'—that is, actors who play the role of a minister," he says. "But [the owner/manager] feels they lack a genuineness that is found in real ministers. That is, we mean what we say, whereas a 'talent' is only repeating some lines."

In these "company weddings," Sawatsky says, "everything is firmly set. Rehearsals are only a few minutes long. Every bride wears the white dress, veil and gloves and carries a bouquet. Every groom is in a tuxedo and carries his gloves in his right hand. There are various times to turn to the audience or turn toward me, and of course there is the exchange of vows and rings, the lifting of the veil and the kiss. There is absolutely no room for individuality or uniqueness."

Sawatsky says a constant frustration for him and his wife, Etsuko, has been "how we can meet people and how we can demonstrate the significance of Jesus Christ, whether by words or by actions."

Presiding at weddings is one way. "It's not ideal," he says, "but it is something."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM news services*

Three schools net computer honors

Three U.S. Mennonite colleges have been recognized for being wired—and that's not referring to caffeine use.

Bluffton (Ohio) College, Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., and Goshen (Ind.) College have been honored by the Website Yahoo as among the "Most Wired" computer-savvy colleges and universities. Goshen was 64th on the survey of national liberal arts colleges; Bluffton was 54th and EMU 75th of baccalaureate II schools.

Nearly 1,300 schools were surveyed. Criteria included upgrading of student computer labs, networking of dorms and classrooms, technical support and online administrative services such as application and registration.

Mediation service meeting English needs

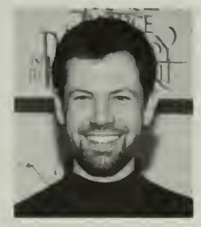
LONDON—Five years ago, it was time for Alastair McKay to make a change. He was working for the British government but feeling at loose ends. He briefly considered ministry until he took a course in mediation offered at the London Mennonite Centre (LMC).

Following the course, LMC director Nelson Kraybill, a worker with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), asked if anyone was interested in starting a mediation service there in London. McKay stepped forward.

"I thought, 'This is it. This is what I want to do,' " he says.

Called Bridge Builders, the program started by offering mediation services in the local community, then switched to congregational mediation. A grant from Mennonite Central Committee Europe allowed McKay to work one day a week for two years. Training events were offered at LMC once or twice a month. But it quickly became evident that McKay needed more training.

In 1997, McKay and his family moved to Harrisonburg, Va., where he entered Eastern Mennonite University's conflict-transformation program. He also added classes from Eastern Mennonite Seminary and from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, in Elkhart, Ind. From January through July 1999, McKay worked with Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Peace Center to gain practical experience.



McKay

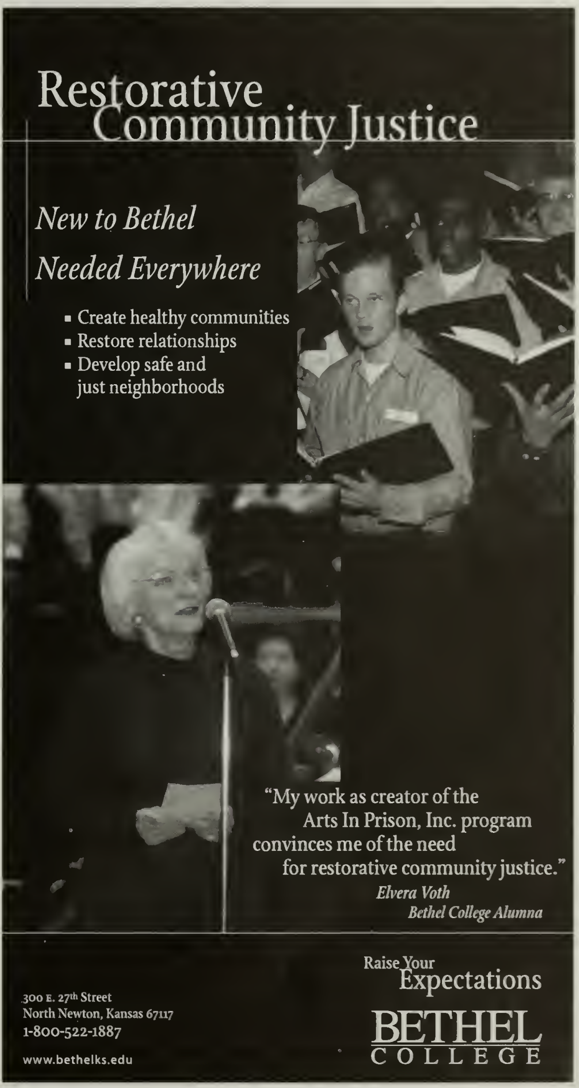
McKay has now returned to London, supported by a one-year contract to work full-time with Bridge Builders out of LMC.

"It goes to show how important this kind of peace witness is to the Mennonites in London, and that they're willing to put themselves on the line financially for it," says Robert J. Charles, MBM director for Europe and Africa.

McKay is now leading a mediation process in a Baptist congregation of about 150 members. "We've never before been able to offer that sort of service," he says. "It's very exciting to be able to offer more than just training. I hope this will continue to be the case."

Recently, the Board of Baptist Superintendents, an area supervisory group for the Baptist Church, met with McKay to begin creating a denominational mediation service. McKay and others involved in Bridge Builders, including MBM worker Mary Thiessen Nation, will begin training Baptists in mediation techniques and conflict-resolution work.

"I think there is a potential for it to have a mission impact," McKay says. "People may come into a church and see that it's OK to have differences and it's OK to discuss those differences. If they find something life-giving in the way the church deals with conflict, then it might help bring them into the church."
—Christy Risser for MBM News Service



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Spanish-language curriculum released

Spanish-speaking Mennonites can now observe a year of Jubilee.

The fourth quarter of the Spanish-language version of the Anabaptist children's Sunday school curriculum was released this spring. Plans call for more translations as funds become available. The project has been spearheaded by Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries.

Also this spring came two Spanish editions of the Good Ground adult Sunday school curriculum, funded by the Hispanic Ministries department of the Commission on Home Ministries.

MCC photo by John Spidialeri

Roadworthy

João Severino de Santana Filho works on a wheelchair at Rodas Alternativas, a small factory in Cabo, Brazil, supported by Mennonite Central Committee. Filho says the market is flooded by disposable wheelchairs, but Rodas Alternatives chairs are strong enough to traverse Cabo's rough, hilly roads. Filho is one of five part-time workers at the factory, located in northeast Brazil, a region plagued by high unemployment rates.

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Youth council says don't separate conventions

HAMPTON, Va.—A group of youth leaders from the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church Canada have unanimously called for youth and adults to continue to hold their conventions together.

The youth convention's growth—St. Louis 99 drew more than 6,300 participants—has created challenges in finding meeting locations to accommodate youth and adults. That has prompted suggestions of holding the youth convention separately.

"We work to get youth to conference, hoping they will develop loyalty and affection for conference," said Shana Peachey Boshart, Iowa-Nebraska Conference youth minister. "Our hope is that someday they will be delegates and want to go as adults."

Boshart was one of more than 30 participants at the annual meeting of the Youth Ministry Council May 3-7 in Hampton. The group is made up of youth ministers and agency personnel from the United States and Canada.

The council also encouraged continuing to hold service projects in conjunction with the youth convention. "We can't do service with integrity with 6,000 youth, but we can embrace a city [that] knows we're there and why," said Brad Carlson, Northern District Conference youth minister.—*Carol Duerksen for GCMC News Service*

Bethel honors 3 alumni

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College honored three graduates at the North Newton school's May 20 alumni banquet.

Franzie Loepp of Normal, Ill., class of 1961, received the Distinguished Achievement Award. For the past 30 years, he has been an industrial technology professor and administrator at Illinois State University in Normal.

Donald Klassen of Harrisburg, S.D., class of 1962, received the Outstanding Alumnus Award. He is the M-2 program coordinator at the South Dakota State Penitentiary, Sioux Falls, and has been active in Choice Books and Mennonite Central Committee relief sales.

Clara Regier Schmidt of Goessel, Kan., received the Outstanding Nursing Alumnus Award, having served much of her career in the Mennonite colonies of Paraguay. She graduated from Bethel in 1941 and earned her nursing degree two years later.

MEDA network expands to eight programs

TOLEDO, Ohio—A network of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) programs to assist low-income entrepreneurs has grown to eight with the addition this year of an initiative in Toledo. This spring, the Toledo program of ASSETS (A Service for Self Employment and Training) graduated 20 participants from its first 13-week training cycle.

ASSETS Toledo was started by the Archbold, Ohio, MEDA chapter. Additional support comes from several local congregations. The program provides basic business training and the counsel of a mentor.

The ASSETS network includes four programs in Pennsylvania, two in California and one in Virginia. A dozen more are planned for the next three to five years. Since ASSETS started in 1993, 488 entrepreneurs have graduated and created or reinforced 256 business. More than 300 full- and part-time jobs have been created.—*MEDA News Service*

AMBS dedicates new guesthouse

ELKHART, Ind.—Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart last month dedicated the addition of a new residence and meeting facility, thanks to three families from the Archbold, Ohio, area.

Frey Guesthouse was made possible by a gift from Elias and Katherine Frey and their two sons and wives, Robert and Joyce Frey and Roger and Sharon Frey. The three families work together in the family real estate and auction business.

The guesthouse was orginally a family dwelling adjacent to campus. It has been renovated to include a small efficiency apartment, five bedrooms, a meeting room and a kitchen. The facility is expected to be used by pastors on campus for continuing education courses and by commuter students.

Ground broken for Bethel science center

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College broke ground May 20 for a $6 million science facility on the North Newton campus. Construction on the Krehbiel Science Center is scheduled to start this month and be completed by next summer. It will house the psychology, physics, chemistry and biology programs.

A major gift came from Fred and Kay Krehbiel of Hinsdale, Ill. The facility's name honors Fred's great-grandparents, J.J. and Anna Leisy Krehbiel, who helped found Bethel 113 years ago.

EMU pole vaulter adds another national title

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University freshman Laura Rosenberger claimed the inaugural National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III women's outdoor pole vault championship May 26. Rosenberger, from State College, Pa., cleared 11 feet, 11¾ inches to become EMU's first outdoor national track champion. The meet was held in Naperville, Ill. Rosenberger in March won the indoor pole vault crown.

by the way ...

In 1926, Valentine Strubhar, a member of the board of the Central Conference of Mennonites (now part of Central District Conference) resigned over Bluffton (Ohio) College's decision to reinstate football.—*Dancing with the Kobzar* by Perry Bush

Puzzling over peace

Sue Klassen of Rochester, N.Y. (left to right), Norman Lyndaker of Lowville, N.Y., and Bruce Acker of Williamsville, N.Y., place puzzle pieces together to create a peace poster during the New York Conference delegate assembly, held April 29 in Auburn, N.Y. Everyone was given puzzle pieces as part of "Peace It Together," asking delegates to support a peace pledge.

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Events

"An Anabaptist Vision for the New Millennium: A Search for Identity" symposium, June 15-18, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. Contact Dale Schrag, 316-284-5356; email <drs@bethelks.edu>.
Allegheny Conference annual meeting, July 6-9, Laurelville, Pa.
YLEAD (Youth Leadership Education and Development" conference, July 13-16, Bluffton (Ohio) College. Keynote speaker Michael Banks. Contact Joyce Schumacher, 800-488-3257; <schumacherj@bluffton.edu>.
"How Can I Keep From Singing?" family folk music festival July 7-9, Bluffton (Ohio) College. Contact Mennofolk, 419-358-4862; <1number@nicsweb.com>.
"Christ, Lord of All Nations," Native biennial assembly, July 24-27, Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz. Contact Chris Graber, 316-283-5100; email <cg@gcmc.org>.
African-American Mennonite Association Assembly, Aug. 11-13, Norristown, Pa.

Births

Allebach, Preston Earl, April 28, to Linda (Hockman) and Robert Brent Allebach, Harleysville, Pa.
Baker, Madelon Dawn, March 26, to Lesa (Kauffman) and Woody Baker, Colorado Springs, Colo.
Bontrager, Benjamin Duane, May 4, to Duane and Marti (Denison) Bontrager, Ashley, Mich.
Bontreger, Lucas Anthony, April 2, to Fran (Poling) and Myron Bontreger, Goshen, Ind.
Bruckhart, Ryan James, April 12, to Denise (Haldeman) and Richard Bruckhart, Manheim, Pa.
Coates, Myriah Felicity, April 21, to Bambi (Mitchell) and Kevin Coates, Ulysses, Pa.
Fajardo, Benjamin Eligio, May 6, to Eligio and Robin (Arnett) Fajardo, Indianapolis.
Fransen, Nicolas Sebastian, April 13, to Frederic Fransen and Angelika Quitschke-Fransen, Fishers, Ind.
Good, Leon Gardner, April 27, to Annetta (Borntrager) and Tom Good, Goshen, Ind.
Hilgenfeld, Jacob Richard, April 10, to Brian and Michelle (Stuart) Hilgenfeld, Wichita, Kan.
Janzen, Grant Wallace, March 16, to Jodi and Mike Janzen, Potwin, Kan.
McHenry, Alison Renee, May 2, to Diana (Shenefelt) and Kevin McHenry, Denver.
Nauman, Josiah Brenton, May 5, to Alicia (Redcay) and Brian Nauman, Manheim, Pa.
Old, Brayden Ryan, March 27, to Kim Litton and Justin Old, Whitewater, Kan.
Reschly, Riara Ann, April 24, to Jackie (Bontreger) and Tom Reschly, Goshen, Ind.
Rhodes, Lauren Mae, May 2, to Kevin and Tonya (Cook) Rhodes, Goshen, Ind.
Schlegel, Solomon Joseph Hildebrand, April 28, to Dianne and Harold Hildebrand Schlegel, St. Jacobs, Ont.
Schrock, Peyton Tobias Lee, May 8, to Kevin and Maree (Gerig) Schrock, Shipshewana, Ind.
Sikora, Hannah Nicole, April 23, to Elizabeth (Harkins) and John Sikora, Pierceton, Ind.
Stahly, Jasmina Alice, March 26, to Jerold and Judith (Siegrist) Stahly, Atmore, Ala.
Stamps, Sarai Nicolle, March 22, to Billy and Laurie Stamps, Newton, Kan.
Stutzman, Rylee Dawn, April 27, to Lyle and Shawana (Sherman) Stutzman, Sarasota, Fla.
Vasey, Jonathan Troy, April 28, to Jennifer (Doerr) and John Vasey, Harleysville, Pa.
Wiebe, Margaret Ruth Schmidt, April 17, to Susan Schmidt and Virgil Wiebe, Baltimore.
Yoder, Ian Gregory, March 21, to Lee and Robin (Lubinski) Yoder, Indianapolis.
Zehr, Collin Joseph, March 29, to Lisa (Roux) and Terry Zehr, Lowville, N.Y.

Marriages

Atwell/Gee: Valerie Atwell, Akron, N.Y., and Scott Gee, Lancaster, N.Y., May 6.
Berner/Goddard: Patricia Berner, Goshen, Ind., and David Goddard, Goshen, April 15 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Buller/Peters: Dacia Buller, Henderson, Neb., and Patrick Peters, Henderson, May 13 at Mennonite Brethren Church, Henderson.
Dagen/Marten: Michael Dagen, Leola, Pa., and Marla Marten, Lancaster, Pa., May 13.
Giffin/Stutzman: Amanda Giffin, Sarasota, Fla., and Chad Stutzman, Sarasota, April 22, at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.
Litton/Ulbrich: Jennifer Litton, Whitewater, Kan., and Derick Ulbrich, Whitewater, March 18 at Newton, Kan.
Matthews/Samuels: Maureen Matthews, Elkton, Va. and Curtis Samuels Jr, Elkton, May 13 at Beldor Mennonite Church, Elkton.

Deaths

Bixler, Howard, 85, Pandora, Ohio, died April 30. Spouse: Helen Woodruff Bixler (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Sarah Kidd Bixler (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Floyd, Sarah Smith, Dorothy Wise; nine grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 4 at Pandora.
Bowman, Michael, 100, Cambridge, Ont., died May 1. Spouse: Mary Ann Cressman Bowman (deceased). Parents: John and Esther Bowman (deceased) Survivors: children Lorne, Leonard, Marvin, Dorothy Rogers; 12 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: May 4 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.
Headrick, Hazel Switser, 96, Colorado Springs, Colo., died April 1. Spouse: Curt Headrick (deceased). Parents: Tobe and Alice Switser (deceased). Survivors: five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; eight great-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: April 5 at Colorado Springs.
Hostetter, Ruth Martin, 95, Gap, Pa., died May 2. Spouse: Eby Hostetter. Parents: Abram and Alice Hersh Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Abram, Isaac, James, Milton, Charles, Ray, Dale, Sanford, Rhoda Clemens, Grace Weaver, Alice, Nancy Gourley; 27 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 6 at Paradise (Pa.) Mennonite Church.
Huddle, Wilmer, 72, Manheim, Pa., died May 10 from complications resulting from Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Katherine Hershey Huddle. Parents: Paul and Clara Strickler Huddle (deceased). Other survivors: children Edwin, Grant, Barbara Ressler; seven grandchildren. Funeral: May 13 at Lancaster, Pa.
Kehr, Stanley, 70, Goshen, Ind., died May 1 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Phyllis Kehr. Parents: Jesse and Winnie Kehr (deceased). Other survivors: children Steve, Jerry, Dianne Hogan; three grandchildren. Funeral: May 5 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.
King, Freeman, 84, Archbold, Ohio, died May 1 of a heart attack. Spouse: Irene Roth King. Parents: Henry and Ida King (deceased). Other survivors: children Jan Fribley; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild; three stepgrandchildren; two step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 4 at Stryker, Ohio.
Owen, Ray, 85, Valparaiso, Ind., died April 30. Spouse: Eva Owen. Parents: Elijah and Maude Hutchinson Owen (deceased). Other survivors: children Beverly Gibson, Larry, Terry, Diane Costas; 16 grandchildren; 43 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 3 at Hopewell Mennonite Church, Kouts, Ind.
Penner, Benjamin, 79, Newton, Kan., died May 6. Spouse: Clara Penner. Parents: Abraham and Elisabeth Gaede Penner (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Monica Lichti; two grandchildren. Funeral: May 9 at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan.
Shirk, Melvin, 73, Sarasota, Fla., died May 7 of cancer. Spouse: Hazel Shirk. Other survivors: children Dorothy Weaver, Merlin, David, James; six grandchildren. Funeral: May 11 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.
Schrag, Elmer, 71, Goessel, Kan., died April 28 of a heart attack. Spouse: Laura Ann Schrag. Parents: Tobias and Fannie Graber Schrag (deceased). Other survivors: children Michelle, Darin; one grandchild. Funeral: May 2 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.
Tressler, Martin, 78, Grantsville, Md., died April 24. Spouse: Earlena Tressler. Parents: John and Annie Eichorn Tressler (deceased). Other survivors: children Ronald, Sherrie Umbel, Rebecca; three grandchildren. Funeral: April 27 at Grantsville.
Unruh, Raymond, 85, Moundridge, Kan., died April 1 of heart failure. Spouse: Stella Reimer Unruh. Parents: David and Rachel Wedel Unruh (deceased). Other survivors: children Cal, Wayne, Maggie Davenport, Debra Schmidt; 12 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 4 at West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge.
Weaver, Esther Pauline Berkey, 98, Goshen, Ind., died May 2. Spouse: Martin Weaver (deceased). Parents: E. J. and Mary Rhodes Berkey (deceased). Survivors: children Carolyn, Glen Eugene, Marian; 12 grandchildren. Memorial service· May 6 at Zion Chapel, Goshen.
Wireman, Harold Jr., 44, Souderton, Pa., died May 11. Parents: Harold (deceased) and Charmaine Wireman. Other survivor: child Heath. Funeral: May 17 at New Hope, Pa.
Works, Denise Lynn, 41, Lebanon, Ore., died May 2 of a lung infection. Parents: Herb and Shirley Works. Other survivor: daughter Christina Williams. Funeral: May 5 at Lebanon.
Yoder, Orris, 71, Shipshewana, Ind., died April 26 of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. Spouse: Doris Lahman Yoder. Parents: John and Jennie Hostetler Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Regina Yoder Yoder, Byard, Paul; six grandchildren. Funeral: April 30 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

classifieds

- **Elementary school teachers needed!** Mennonite Voluntary Service is looking for people interested in teaching K-7 at ***Hopi Mission School***, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., beginning August 2000. Please inquire at MVS, 316-283-5100 or email <mvs@gcmc.org>.

- **Ephrata Mennonite School** is seeking a ***social studies/PE teacher***, starting August 2000. An accredited school, EMS has 200 students grades K-9. Write to David L. Sauder, Principal, 598 Stevens Road, Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-738-4266 or 717-859-1344.

- **Belleville Mennonite School** has teacher openings beginning August 2000: ***choral director and music teacher*** and ***high school science***. Please contact Ray Baker, Superintendent, P.O. Box 847, Belleville, PA 17004; 717-935-2184; email <bmsoffice@lcworkshop.com>.

- **Penn View Christian School** is seeking a ***middle school science teacher*** and an ***instrumental (band) teacher*** beginning in the 2000-2001 school year. Penn View serves 575 students K-8. Please send your resume to Robert Rutt, Penn View Christian School, 420 Cowpath Road, Souderton, PA 18964; 216-723-1196.

- **Providence Mennonite Church**, Newport News, Va., is hosting a ***centennial celebration, Oct. 7-8, 2000***. Request registration forms before Sept. 1 from Providence Centennial Committee, 13101 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, VA 23602; 757-249-2702; fax 757-881-9709; email <pmcnn@aol.com>.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 345) invites applications for the following teaching positions for 2000-01: ***6th grade, social studies 7 & 8, high school English, orchestra, Spanish, German*** (60-75%). Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <dueckak@hotmail.com>.

- **Lake Center Christian School** (K-8) in Hartville, Ohio, is accepting applications for an ***elementary/middle school music teacher***. A part-time or full-time position is available. Fax resumes to Matt McMullen, Principal, 330-877-2040; or call 330-877-2049.

- **Eastern Mennonite Missions** Global Ministries seeks ***representative to Latin America/Caribbean***. 50-80%, beginning August 2000. Reside in Latin America or U.S. Identify, develop EMM's vision, strategy for longer-term missions in region; oversee personnel.

  Contact Mervin Charles, Box 458, Salunga, PA 17538-0458; 717-898-2251; <mervinc@emm.org>.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** has an opening for a ***1st grade teacher*** for the 2000-2001 school year. Bachelor's degree in education required. Early childhood emphasis preferred. Send letter of application, resume and application to Crist Peachey, Administrator, MCDS, 686 Lebanon Rd., Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries** is taking applications for the ***director of ministerial leadership services*** position, a half-time assignment managing the pastor-calling system (resumes and references for pastor candidates), and serving conference ministers in the Mennonite Church USA. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

  Send resume and references by July 1 to Everett Thomas, MBCM, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245; email <vrtt@juno.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Edmonton, Alberta, is looking for an ***interim/transitional pastor*** to commence Sept. 1, 2000, for a 1- to 2-year term. We are a multigenerational urban congregation of 200+ members and adherents. The position would include spiritual leadership from the pulpit, worship leading and pastoral ministry. A major focus of this position would be to coordinate, with a committee, a pastoral needs assessment of the congregation.

  Please direct resumes, inquiries or nominations by June 30 to Adela Wedler, 1903-111 A Street, Edmonton, AB T6J 5L9; 780-437-1504; email <awedler@mail2.westworld.ca>.

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classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** invites applications for the position of ***assistant principal***, beginning July 1, 2000. The assistant principal serves as assistant to the chief administrator for a growing school with 45 faculty and staff and current enrollment of 345 students in grades 6-12. Candidates should be people deeply committed to Christian faith as interpreted by the Mennonite Church and should possess a vision for Christian education. Responsibilities include overseeing the school's daily operations, student discipline, teacher supervision and leadership of the middle school program. Candidates should hold, or be prepared to obtain, administrative licensure in Indiana. Administrative experience is preferred.

  Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <dueckak@hotmail.com>.

- **Hesston College** seeks applicants for ***director of publications***. The director works with admissions, alumni and development to produce Hesston's marketing literature. Responsibilities: supervise a designer and a student assistant, collaborate with a photographer/web content manager, write and distribute news releases/feature stories and produce internal publications in cooperation with a variety of departments. Qualifications: excellent writing and editing skills, background in print production, commitment to the Mennonite Church and Mennonite higher education. Bachelor's degree required, experience preferred. 10- to 12-month position.

  Send resume and references to Elam Peachey, Executive Vice President for Advancement, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062. Questions? Call 316-327-8111 or email <elamp@hesston.edu>.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat**, a dynamic, multifaceted Mennonite camping ministry in the Pocono Mountains of Pa., seeks ministry-minded people to fill two key positions:

  Director of operations: Will ensure a positive guest experience through supervision of housekeeping, food service and maintenance managers; oversight of building projects, management of operational resources. Experience helpful in personnel management, project/construction oversight and administration. Strong interpersonal and organizational skills a must. Position will begin early fall.

  Construction coordinator: Will contribute to ministry growth by carrying out renovation and construction projects. Responsibilities include project planning, purchasing supplies, hands-on construction and some staff/volunteer/contractor supervision. Also involves general maintenance work. Experience in building trades a necessity. Position begins immediately.

  Salary and liberal benefits package for both positions. On-camp housing available. Send resume to Personnel, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 570-595-7505; fax 570-595-0328; email <retreat@enter.net>; web <www.sprucelake.org>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks a ***director of the academic support center***, who serves as academic adviser for conditionally admitted students and coordinates the student advocacy program for conditional students. Supervises student disabilities services for students with documented learning disabilities. Teaches in the undergraduate program. Master's degree in English or education required. EMU seeks faculty who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Marie Morris, Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email <dean@emu.edu>. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Western Mennonite School** is seeking qualified faculty and staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered educational setting. Western (grades 6-12) is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley in the Northwest. For more information, contact Principal Eric Martin, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000; email <Martines@teleport.com>.

  Summer 2000: ***Business manager:*** full-time position to manage business affairs and supervise personnel; budgeting, accounting and technical experience necessary. ***Assistant principal:*** part-time position; responsibilities include supervision of instruction and curriculum for expanding middle school and high school programs. May be combined with teaching duties for full-time position. ***Facilities manager:*** full-time position; management and supervisory experience necessary to lead a team that maintains and cares for facilities, plant and grounds. The campus includes 6 buildings with multiple parking lots, driveways and 40 acres of forested property.

  Fall 2000: ***Spanish instructor:*** level I, II and III; may also include ESL instruction. ***Health and PE instructor:*** middle school and high school levels, coaching interest desired. ***Assistant girls resident director:*** full-time voluntary service position; focus on team-oriented youth ministry. Responsibilities include counseling and assisting in coordination of activities. Housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided. ***Boys soccer coach:*** head varsity.

- **Sharing Programs Inc.**, Lancaster, Pa., a property/casualty mutual aid program, seeks ***department leader for finance/information systems***. Requires 5-10 yrs work experience in accounting, business and/or finance; bachelor's degree in same, info systems or related field; 3-5 yrs in management; knowledge of client/server and PC network technology. Insurance experience desirable.

  Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367; email <hr@splmc.com>. Visit <www.sharingprograms.com>.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a K-8 multiracial, inner-city Christian elementary school, seeks applications for a full-time ***director of development***. Minimum requirement a bachelor's degree in business, marketing, communications, education or similar field. Marketing or development experience desirable. Seeking self-motivated individual with strong communication and organizational skills; sensitivity, respect and ability to relate to a diverse constituency; and a belief in the mission of CMLC. Applications will be accepted until August 1. Targeted starting date Sept. 18.

  Send letter of application and resume to Marvin Friesen, Principal, Chicago Mennonite Learning Center, 4647 W. 47th St., Chicago, IL 60632. For more information call 773-735-9304.

- **The Conservatory for Music Education**, Albany, Ore., has positions open for ***administrative assistant*** and instructors in ***piano, voice, strings, guitar, woodwinds, brass*** for expansion of current program as well as ***choir and band director*** for middle and high school. A private music school teaching toddlers (18 mo.) through adults, as well as contracting music to parochial preschools through high schools in the Albany, Corvallis, Lebanon, Salem areas. Bachelor and master's degrees preferred. Must take initiative, work collaboratively with the administrator and be a team player.

  Send resume and references to Roma J. Eicher, NCTM Administrator, 35355 Eicher Rd. SE, Albany, OR 97321. For more information phone 541-926-2975 or email <cmeroma@proaxis.com>.

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Our cosmic connection

by Calvin King

The Hubble Space Telescope—launched in 1990—and other huge telescopes have changed forever our view of the universe. By measuring distances and the amount of time it takes light to travel, we know that our cosmos is much older than we were taught as children. It's not 6,000 years old, for example—more like 12 billion years old. It's much larger than we ever imagined. The closest star is about 4.3 light-years away, and the farthest galaxy discovered by Hubble is about 10 billion light-years away.

The universe is more alive and changing than we previously imagined. We now know, through pictures taken by the Hubble, that stars are being created, while others are dying. This process is not easily observable because it takes place over hundreds of millions of years. For example, our sun, which is actually one of the billions of stars in our Milky Way galaxy, has changed in color from bluish-white to yellow because, at 4.5 billion years old, it is halfway through its expected life span.

In the past we perceived our world as static, unchanging. Nothing could be farther from the truth. God's creation of the world was not a one-time event in the past but a continuing, dynamic process.

Discoveries in astrophysics in the last century have created a paradigm shift in humanity's consciousness about the cosmos and our connection to it. Our universe began evolving billions of years ago as energy transformed into atoms and atoms collected into stars. Later, dying stars exchanged their lighter elements of hydrogen and helium to form heavier elements, like carbon and oxygen, which eventually supported the evolution of life on a planet like ours. This happened many years before humankind ever appeared on the scene. We are the latecomers to this ongoing process of God's creation.

God is not finished. Creation is still evolving. It's been a continuing development from the first moment in time, and humanity is a part of that development. Science has a lot of evidence for this picture of creation in which both the universe and humanity have been in gradual, progressive change over long periods of time. We see evidence of this change in the space explored by our telescopes, in the fossils uncovered from earth and in our microscopes studying DNA. Our universe is not static. Creation is a dynamic, continuing process.

Unfortunately, the church has not been helpful in integrating this concept of an evolutionary creation into our faith experience. Instead of allowing science to help us better understand God's creation process, the church too often sees the evolutionary explanations of science as a threat to our faith. It is reminiscent of how the church condemned Galileo for believing the earth revolved around the sun. It took hundreds of years before the church accepted what science had discovered, that the sun, not the earth, was the center of our solar system. The church today is in danger of making a similar mistake, being defensive as astrophysics discovers an evolving creation.

In his book *Theology of Creation in an Evolutionary World* (Pilgrim Press, 1997), Karl Schmitz-Moormann explains that during the Middle Ages, theologians were often the only ones who knew how to read and write. They knew and understood the science of their day. With the Reformation, the emphasis among Protestant leaders changed to perceiving the revelation of God as coming to us primarily through the written word instead of through examination of God's creation.

We came to distrust science as having a valid contribution to make toward understanding our creation. We diminished the revelation of God that comes through examining the cosmos. We learned to distrust our own experiences in God's world.

In contrast, the Israelites were a nomadic people who lived in the great outdoors, putting them more in touch with God's world. When the psalmist looked up at the night sky, he saw God revealed. He wrote: "O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth! ... When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?" (Psalm 8:1,3,4).

The church has de-emphasized the continuing revelation of God that comes through the scientific study of God's creation and made primary a closed revelation of God that comes through the written word. We need both. We need to return to the balance that existed earlier in the church. One of the best ways to know the mind of the Creator is to know God's creation. The church would have a more accurate view of God if we integrated the current knowledge of science and our Christian faith.

God's world is much more dynamic and awesome than we've thought. Let's reclaim our connection to the cosmos. After all, we have the same Creator.

One of the best ways to know the mind of the Creator is to know God's creation. The church would have a more accurate view of God if we integrated the current knowledge of science and our Christian faith.

Calvin King has a Master of Divinity degree from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., and is a member of the Astronomical Society of Kansas City. He lives in Lenexa, Kan.

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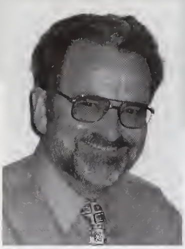


J. Lorne Peachey

Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?

What must it have been like to have been one of the believers present at that first Pentecost described in Acts 2? After the horror of the crucifixion, the euphoria of the resurrection and the confusion of Jesus' return to heaven, those who still believed had to get away by themselves to figure things out. Suddenly there was a roaring like a mighty windstorm, and the Holy Spirit, like flames of fire, came to every man and woman present. That had to be an awesome experience.

It continues to be awesome. As part of the Christian church, which commemorates Pentecost on June 11, I'm still trying to figure out what this event and the presence of the Spirit mean for me. This quest keeps bringing me back to these words of the apostle Paul: "Don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?" (1 Corinthians 6:19 NLT) and "This precious treasure … is held in perishable containers, that is, in our weak bodies" (2 Corinthians 4:7).

God's Spirit is present on this earth not as some doctrine to which we give assent, an ethereal feeling that we strive to have or a special gift that comes if we're good enough. Paul says God has chosen to be in the bodies of those who are God's children—in our flesh and blood, skin and bones.

The miracle of Pentecost is that God chooses to continue to be manifest in human bodies regardless of their condition.

That the divine would choose to be manifest in what is earthly, decaying, mortal is miraculous indeed. Other religions deny the body, flagellate it into submission or consider it something evil to rise above. By contrast, the Bible says the human body is God's temple.

Not that we Christians have done all that well in living out this biblical view. Too often we also have seen the body as evil, believing that our desires and needs, fantasies and dreams, disappointments and joys—the stuff that occupies most of our waking hours—are somehow removed from God and God's presence on this earth.

But Paul says God looks at us another way. God chooses to be present on earth through what we are so often ashamed of or hesitant to be honest about: our bodies. To me it's not without significance that Paul makes this declaration in the context of a discussion of sex, a subject that continues to dog the church today.

What does it mean to live with a body that is God's temple? I see these implications:

1. I need to live each day with the awareness that I am this temple. The physical body that people identify as me is also how they know God. What people see, hear and feel when they are in my presence is how they see, hear and feel God. I am not God, but I am God's ambassador. The believers at that first Pentecost surely felt that. No wonder they were so energized by the experience.

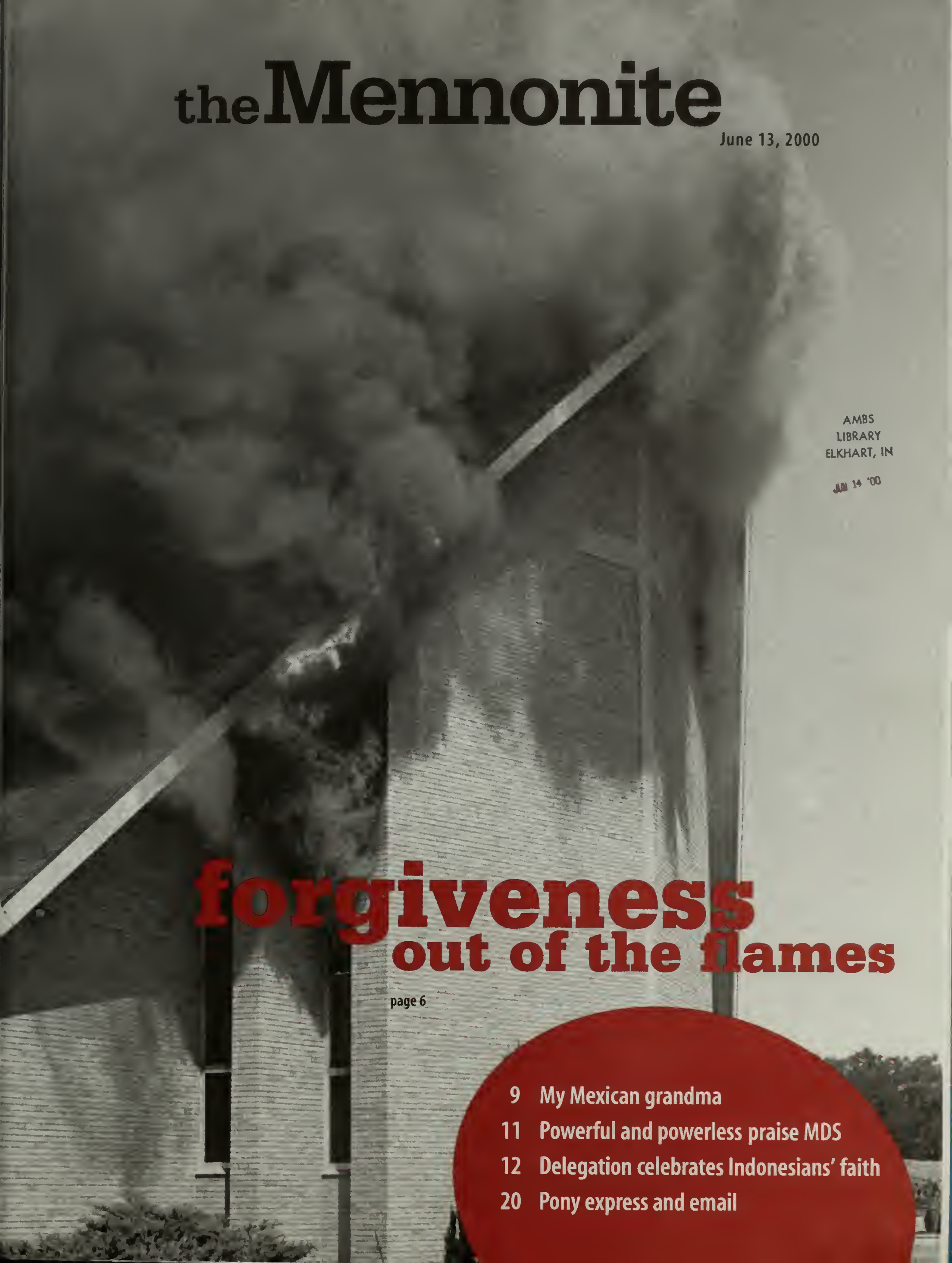
2. Since my body is the dwelling of God's Spirit, I will take care of this body. That means not giving in to addictions, such as overeating or overwork, and allowing them to control me. It means exercising, meditating, reducing stress and finding creative ways to take care of myself. If I am the dwelling place of God's Spirit, taking care of my body is as much a spiritual discipline as prayer and Bible study.

3. Because God's Spirit is in me, I have a different attitude toward myself and the body that is mine. This means liking who I am. It means appreciating my body because it is the temple of God.

This is an attitude that is difficult to come by. Every day I am confronted by diet plans and recreational schemes that urge me not to like who I am. While there are legitimate reasons for dieting and exercising and other ways to improve myself, I find that equally important as a Christian is coming to a healthy attitude about myself.

Fortunately, we don't need a perfect body to be God's dwelling place. The Spirit chooses to dwell in all kinds of bodies, including those that don't function right, those wracked with pain, those consumed by illnesses. God promises eternal redemption for all bodies. Meanwhile, the miracle of Pentecost is that God chooses to continue to be present on this earth in human bodies regardless of their condition.

When that realization penetrates our beings, in our bodies, we will be as energized as the disciples were when the Spirit first came in Acts 2. And Pentecost will continue to be with us.—*jlp*



the Mennonite

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Where is the love?

Sometimes I wonder how many people who write letters to the editor expressing knowledge of God's will on homosexuality, abortion, transformation and other issues have lately read 1 Corinthians 13, which is one of the most beautiful and meaningful chapters in the Bible. The author, Paul, begins by saying that if he could understand all speech, all mysteries and all knowledge, or if he had the faith to move mountains, but didn't have love, he wouldn't amount to anything. In verses 3 to 8, he tells us that love is hopeful, loyal, supportive, never selfish, kind, forbearing, rejoices in the truth and enduring. Love is the cement that unites and holds institutions and people together.

Then in verses 8b to 12, Paul addresses those of us who think we know what the Bible says. He says we don't know everything and that which we know will soon be forgotten. Our knowledge is like that of children. Our view of God is a cloudy picture. We don't know much, and what we claim to know is only part of the picture. Paul ends this little but extremely relevant chapter by saying you may have knowledge, you may be a martyr for your faith, you may have hope and faith, but if you don't have love, you really don't count for much because love is the greatest binding force there is. Our love for God and others is the only thing that really counts. Over the years, Amish, Mennonites and others have fought over issues most of which have been forgotten. How much love is there in our pros and cons?

I invite people to read 1 Corinthians to see if it speaks to the current conditions of personal and institutional life.—*Harley J. Stucky, North Newton, Kan.*

Questions of unity

For me, the May 13 editorial ("Is GC-MC Merger the Will of God?") struck exactly the right tone, especially the warning not to be overly sure about whether organizational integration is or is not the clear will of God.

Organizational integration has its merits. Yet in my own experience, the unity I feel with General Conference Mennonite Church brothers and sisters today is no stronger than it was when we simply cooperated in friendly fashion. And I still wonder whether integration might even be making it harder for Mennonite Brethren, Amish, "plain" Mennonites and others of the broader Anabaptist-Mennonite family to feel unity with us and we with them.

Is unity so much a matter of sitting on the same boards and committees? Or is it more a matter of taking others seriously as Christian brothers and sisters and seeing them as offering some emphases and practices that are good challenges to our own, perhaps even good correctives? If it is the latter, should we be concentrating so much on joining the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church? Or would our discernment be richer if our sights were wider and less preoccupied with organization?—*Theron F. Schlabach, Goshen, Ind.*

The tax collector's reward

Marlin Jeschke is far too easy on Zacchaeus ("Reach Out to Outsiders," May 23). Indeed, to be a rich tax collector was to be a thief of the worst sort. Zacchaeus stole in a systematic way by being an agent for the colonial Roman power. It is precisely this power and its quislings that Jesus came to overthrow when he proclaimed good news to the poor. Zacchaeus was instrumental in making the poor poor in the first place. That such a one as Zacchaeus could be saved is the thrust of the story.—*Mitchell Brown, Wilmette, Ill.*

A hard question

On March 9, representatives of more than 30 church-related groups joined in a plea to President Clinton to impose a moratorium on death penalty executions. "Our nation is slowly realizing the truth of capital punishment: The death penalty as applied in America today threatens to shed innocent blood," their letter said. "There are too many death penalty cases where questions remain—or even arise—after the execution has occurred." The letter was signed by leaders of Baptist, Catholic, Episcopal, Greek Orthodox, Jewish, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Quaker and United Church of Christ organizations. No Mennonites. Long at the forefront of anti-death penalty activities, and with excellent Mennonite Central Committee materials, one must ask a hard question: Where are the Mennonites?—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

The poverty of language

I found it refreshing to read Marlene Kropf's letter about the choice of songs used in *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (Readers Say, May 9). My mother taught me, as a preteen, that God is spirit, and all anthropomorphic language was to help us understand what some of his characteristics were, not his gender. Those arguments,

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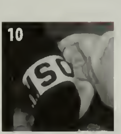
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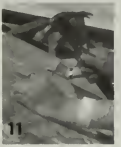
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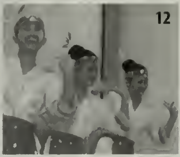
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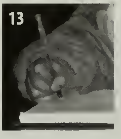
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y readers say

I thought, had long been left behind, only now I find them surfacing in the last decades in the Mennonite church with renewed venom.

To refer to God as displaying feminine characteristics, as the Scriptures do in a number of places, in no way indicates that he is somehow or somewhat female. To refer to God in male language, as the Scriptures do in more than 1,000 places, in no way indicates that he is somehow or somewhat male. To refer to his feathers in no way makes him avian (Psalm 91:4). To refer to Jesus as a lion or to God as a bear in no way makes them feline or ursine (Hosea 13:8, Revelation 5:5). To sing "Behold the Lamb of God" in no way indicates that he is somehow ovine. Will someone next come up with an argument that we must also include or exclude hymns about the "Vegetable of God"? Jesus is referred to in Scripture as having plant characteristics (Isaiah 11:1, John 15). The very thought is disgusting.

So why should we be uptight about all this? As Kropf indicates, all the best that we humans can do, all the metaphors and similes of humans and angels to describe our God still leave us with our language in abject poverty. Let us be considerate of each other with our hang-ups; let's not use these figures of speech as clubs to hit each other over the head. *—Elmer H. Maust, Accident, Md.*

Lack of emphasis

I was pleased to read the May 23 editorial on the subject of the future life ("Well-Aged Wine and Choice Beef"). As the editorial said, there is little emphasis today on the life that is to come. Perhaps this explains why there is so little motivation to live a holy life. "He that hath this hope in him purifies himself even as he is pure" (1 John 3:3).*—Alfred E. Sauer, Moundridge, Kan.*

Cover photo by Tim Waltner

You can't grow food and flowers in the same field

The countries that owe almost $2 trillion to foreign creditors are rich in natural resources. But when these countries use their natural resources to earn foreign currency to repay these debts, their people suffer. Land that once grew food is now used to grow flowers, coffee and other export crops.

To discover how you can join others working to alleviate the burdens of those most affected by these debts, call your nearest MCC office and ask for a copy of the new, free "Debt causes hunger" resource.

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Life in a controlled environment

by Michael Jewell

If anyone volunteered to push her wheelchair,
she could go down the ramp to the garden
and see the last gladiolas of autumn.
She tolerated the afternoon
ice cream parties

given at the Home: old time piano recitals
with thirty patients parked in rows,
and afterward the nondenominational
ministers who prayed with them
for an hour

and then went away, as she tolerated
the weekly changing of sheets. There was
no accounting for what people enjoyed.
But she could make few allowances
for visitors

Illustrations by Ingrid Hess

who did not know the names of the flowers
to which she pointed, or of the songbirds
she watched from her window.
Frustrated by her inability
to say what she was thinking,

she became irritable at vague answers,
shaking her head and looking as stern
as possible for one so frail,
until the proper apologies
could be made.

Michael Jewell lives in Burlington, Vt.

Forgiveness out of the flames

by Tim Waltner

On Aug. 10, 1985, members of Salem Mennonite Church near Freeman, S.D., watched their church building burn. Their pain only intensified when soon afterward two young community residents—17 and 18 years old—were charged with setting the fire. They were convicted and sentenced, the older of the two to the state penitentiary in Sioux Falls, the younger to the juvenile system.

The two apologized for their action, and the congregation went about the task of rebuilding. Within two years, a new church building stood on the site of the fire. Life went on for the 500 members of Salem, and the congregation settled into the routine of this rural farming community.

Time seemed to have provided healing.

But Salem members felt unsettled when they opened the Oct. 12, 1998, issue of their local weekly newspaper, the *Freeman Courier*.

In a letter to the editor, David P. Hansen, the older of the two responsible for the crime, asked for forgiveness for his role in the vandalism and fire 13 years earlier. "It is long overdue," he wrote. "I apologize to the Freeman community and the Salem Mennonite Church. I am guilty to the charges of third-degree advising another to commit arson, first-degree intentional damage and third-degree burglary. I hope someday you can forgive me." He also explained that he was being treated for manic depression. "The medication I'm now on has opened my eyes and heart to the woes I have caused."

As he studied the Bible, David came to believe in God, a forgiving God who will help if you ask. He also realized he had to ask for something else.

This public request took the members of Salem aback. Many were perplexed because both offenders had sent letters to the congregation apologizing for their actions shortly after the fire. The pastor had read the letters on a Sunday morning and invited people to stand as a symbol of their forgiveness. Most did.

"Many thought we'd already forgiven him," says Don R. Waltner, chair of Salem's board of deacons at the time of the letter. But as it turned out, the process of forgiveness had only begun.

Out of control: Fire consumes the 30-year-old brick meeting place of Salem Mennonite Church.

The deacons discussed David's letter at their next meeting. "It was something we couldn't ignore," Don says. "I felt it was something we needed to address."

The matter was added to the congregation's annual business meeting agenda several weeks later. The consensus from that meeting, Don says, was that "David was asking for forgiveness, and we needed to find a way to respond to him."

Resources within: Salem had several resources within its own ranks. The board formed a four-member mediation team, which asked Lois Janzen-Preheim, a member of Salem and director of VORP (Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program) in Sioux Falls, S.D., to help facilitate a meeting with Hansen.

Another resource was Salem's strong tradition of involvement with the M-2 prison ministry program. Members Roland and Arlene Preheim had reached out to David in the early 1990s while he was serving time for his role in the church fire.

They visited regularly—"friend to friend," Roland says. "We just visited; we didn't get into the factual things."

David served nine years, six months and 11 days of his 12-year sentence. Upon his release in the summer of 1995, he got a telemarketing job in Brookings, S.D., about an hour north of Sioux Falls. But alcohol, hanging with the wrong crowd and what he calls "poor judgment" led Hansen back to prison in April 1998 for burglary.

[The fire] had a profound impact on my life. It's a chapter in my book of life that hasn't closed. I'm reminded of it every day. I remember it like it was yesterday.—*David Hansen*

"That was a real letdown for us," Arlene says. With David back behind bars, the Preheims renewed their M-2 relationship with him. They didn't hide their disappointment, but neither did they hide their caring and concern. "We have kids," Arlene says. "I treat him just as my own."

While in prison for the second time, David's life took a dramatic turn when he picked up some Bible tracts made available to prisoners. "They were on a desk, and I grabbed a few and just started reading them," he says. "And I started reading the Bible."

The more David read the Bible, the more he gained a deeper understanding of his life and of God. Although he had been baptized and confirmed in his family's rural Freeman Lutheran congregation, David says, "I don't think I was ever a part of church."

"I felt I don't need God ... I don't need anybody," he says. And for most of his life, David says, he blamed God for all that had gone wrong. "As I matured, I came to realize that it wasn't [God's] doing."

As he studied the Bible, David says, he came to "believe in God, a forgiving God who will help if you ask." He also realized he had to ask for something else. Thus, in the fall of 1998, David wrote his letter to the editor.

"I had this feeling I had to do this," he says. "I had always had guilt. It was my responsibility to make the effort. I think I had a preknowledge that something positive would happen."

Many Salem members, Lois says, felt they didn't need to think about this anymore. "But it was still open for David," she says.

When David decided to write his letter to the editor, it challenged the members of Salem to face the issue as well.

Spectrum of feelings: With the congregation's affirmation, the deacons held several small-group listening sessions. It wasn't easy. "There was a spectrum of feelings," Don says.

While some were ready to forgive immediately, others wanted no part of it. The most common response was a genuine desire to forgive but uncertainty over trust: If you forgive, do you have to trust? The mediation team suggested the congregation separate the two issues to make it easier to move forward together.

From those meetings, the mediation team—three men and one woman—drew together the various feelings from the small-group discussions so they could represent the full congregation in the meeting with David.

On July 9, 1999, they met with David face-to-face at the South Dakota State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls. Lois served as the mediator. Seated next to David were Arlene and Roland Preheim.

The meeting was remarkably free of tension, and following an introduction and instructions from Lois, the exchange began. It proved to be heartfelt, honest sharing. David began by sharing his story and what had brought him to this point. He detailed the night of the fire.

He said it began Aug. 9 with partying, alcohol and drugs in a nearby town. On their way home, the two young men went past the church. An impulsive search for money in the church turned to vandalism. Graffiti with references to satanism were used to "throw off suspicion," David said. Then fear of fingerprints prompted David to suggest starting a fire to cover the evidence.

Someone first noticed the fire shortly after 5 the next morning, and firefighters responded quickly and believed they had extinguished it. But a second fire in a second-floor storage room had gone undetected. Around 10 a.m., as officials were doing a thorough inspection, a fireball roared from the room. In minutes the fire was out of control, and nothing could be done to save the 30-year-old brick structure.

"I am responsible for the fire," David said. "I believe that if it wasn't for me it wouldn't have happened.

"It had a profound impact on my life. It's a chapter in my book of life that hasn't closed. I'm reminded of it every day. I remember it like it was yesterday."

The four members of the mediation team shared their memories of that day as well.

continued on page 8

'A renewed sense of being the people of the church': Salem Mennonite Church holds a Sunday morning worship service on Aug. 11, 1985, about 24 hours after the fire.

Tim Waltner, *Freeman Courier*

Tim Waltner, *Freeman Courier*

'Just as my own': Roland and Arlene Preheim stand with David Hansen (right).

Forgiveness

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They shared the feelings of hurt and pain and anger voiced by members of the congregation. And they raised the question: Why bring this up again?

David said he wrote the first letter of apology shortly after the fire, because it was expected. "I did wrong; OK, I'll write a letter of apology," he said.

"This one's more sincere," he said. "I was convicted to do it from inside."

"I think the response of the congregation was probably a little bit the same feeling: 'He asked for an apology, we should forgive him. … It's the Christian thing to forgive,' " Gene Waltner told David.

Lynette Preheim, another team member, shared a comment she received from a Salem member: "The first time, I stood up because everyone one [else] stood up and it was expected of me; I didn't really forgive. But this time, I can."

The reconciliation between David Hansen and the people of Salem reveals what is possible if people are open to their true feelings and the redemptive nature of God.

Support group: The members of the mediation team offered counsel and suggestions. They encouraged David to find a support group, to maintain a relationship with a church and to be cautious about the company he keeps.

"There are people who will not trust your sincerity," Gordon Brockmueller told David. "It will come in time; it will come in the life you live when you get out."

"What will give you assurance that we have forgiven you?" asked Don.

"I figured I'd feel it inside," David told him. "In some ways I already do."

David was released from prison last December. He moved to Redfield, a community about 125 miles north of Freeman. He rents an apartment and works for a telemarketing company. He wants to get himself established, marry and have a family.

Upon his release, the outreach committee from Salem collected money and sent it to David for clothing and his first month's rent.

This meant a great deal to David. But what matters even more, he says, are the cards and letters he's received from the members of Salem, from people of all ages. "They are like pure gold to me," he says.

They confirmed what he had been feeling since that summer mediation. "I feel forgiven," he says.

"I've had a lot of problems over the years," David told the mediation team. "My mom got pregnant in college and I got dumped off at my grandparents and I had a lot of resentment about that and felt I wasn't loved."

But now, he said, his relationship with God has given him a new perspective. He described his relationship with God as "at an all-time high."

This process has taken time and effort. The July mediation meeting was videotaped, and several weeks later 120 members of the congregation gathered to watch it. Reaction to the reconciliation that has taken place has been positive.

"Forgiveness is not something you put in a package and give to someone," Don says. "The biblical evidence is so strong for forgiveness and restoration. It is so clear-cut and at the core of Christianity."

While the relationship between Salem and David reveals hope and promise, reconciliation with the younger of the two offenders hasn't reached that point. Ironically, he was a member of the congregation at the time of the fire; his mother remains a member.

"We still need to work on that," Lois says.

On a sunny morning, Aug. 11, 1985, 24 hours after the fire had begun moving through their meetinghouse, the people of Salem met for their Sunday morning worship service. With the burned-out shell of the church in the background, they gathered on makeshift benches and lawn chairs in the parking lot.

Mike Bogard, interim pastor at the time, suggested the tragedy could offer "a renewed sense of being the people of the church."

Nearly 15 years later, the reconciliation between David Hansen and the people of Salem reveals what is possible if people are open to their true feelings and the redemptive nature of God.

This story is one "of the quantity and the quality of forgiveness," says Roland.

"And," Arlene adds, "this story is not finished."

Tim Waltner is editor of the Freeman Courier *in Freeman, S.D.*

My Mexican grandma

by Pam Stevenson

She's probably no more than 4 feet 5 inches tall. No one is sure how old she is, but the lines in her face speak of years of experience. Her grandchildren and great-grandchildren all defer to her. Despite her poverty, her filthy, braided ponytail and her foul odor, she has a quiet dignity about her.

She has never acknowledged me or any of the other soup kitchen volunteers. She speaks rapid-fire Spanish with her Mexican neighbors at the table. She has a sharp voice, amazingly strong and clear for such a frail person.

Even when members of her family sit at the table with her, she seems to stand apart, a relic from an earlier age, a loner, a woman whose face tells me she's been left behind many times.

Lunch at the soup kitchen is the highlight of her day. The noise of a full dining room breaks the monotony. The steaming trays of food help relieve the gnawing of her stomach. Her eyes follow the women who scoop up the day's fare: casseroles, enchiladas, green chili stew, whatever we can find that day to feed the hungry crowd.

The noise of a full dining room breaks the monotony. The steaming trays of food help relieve the gnawing of her stomach.

We all call her Grandma. Somehow it stuck. She's not anybody's ideal, but I find myself drawn to her. She makes me smile. I suppose it's my sense of humor. She's the opposite of everybody's picture of a sweet, apple-cheeked, cookie-baking grandma. But it touches me to see her in the line day after day. The brightly flowered kerchief over her tangled braid, her slightly trembling hands clutching the plastic tray as she approaches my spot in the serving line. She nods vigorously as I place the dessert next to her steaming bowl of soup.

One day, as I glance at her quietly enjoying a bread pudding made out of stale doughnuts, I impulsively scoop up a second portion and place it on her table. She doesn't speak but picks up the pudding and slowly savors each new mouthful.

The next week I place some Oreo cookies from the pantry in a rolled-up napkin. A week later I ask my husband to deliver a little extra to her table to see if he gets a response. Nothing. My Mexican grandma receives these favors as if it is her due.

The next day's meal begins as usual, with one notable exception. Grandma points to one of the dessert shells filled with fruit and whipped cream and nods. Then she proceeds to her usual table and nibbles with great deliberation and samples the whipped topping by running a none-too-clean index finger through the fluffy white mound. She nods her braided head in firm approval and devours the concoction with relish. She then reaches to a neighbor's tray and borrows a second helping, cleaning up any dribbles on the table with a slightly crooked smile.

Unable to resist the temptation, I place a third helping of the delicacy next to her. This time I see the kerchiefed head slowly turn toward me and back to the teeming tray. She rises from her perch and carries her tray to the rack, where a busy volunteer stands waiting. As she heads for the door, she makes a slight detour just inches from me. There she stands, tying and retying her bandana and clutching the faded blue coat tightly around her. Her sparkling brown eyes look up into mine. A toothless smile lights up her dark, lined, withered face. Then in her commanding voice she booms, "Dut. Goot." Without further ado my Mexican grandma shuffles out the kitchen door, swiping a fourth dessert firmly in her shaking grasp. She's had enough for one day.

Pam Stevenson is from Clinton, Ont. She and her husband, Bill, were members of Service Opportunities for Older Persons (SOOP) at Carlsbad (N.M.) Mennonite Church for six months during 1997-98.

MDS's 50th anniversary commemoration rings with celebration of the past, hope for the future

HESSTON, Kan.—When 25-year-old Nathan Koslowsky hit a hammer on a metal railing during the 50th anniversary celebration of Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS), he rang hope into the hearts of his elders that the young are catching the vision to serve.

Koslowsky and his wife, Danielle, are MDS's youngest project directors, serving in a tornado-ravaged part of Little Rock, Ark. They spoke at the inter-Mennonite agency's celebration, held June 2-4 at Hesston College.

Nathan Koslowsky hit the hammer on a railing in Yost Center and said that 2,000 years ago a hammer drove nails through "the wrists and ankles of our Savior, bringing hope."

Koslowsky struck again: "Fifty years ago, a new hammer was picked up, bringing hope to survivors of disasters," he said.

The sound echoed a third time: "Today generations of the future take the hammer from tired hands and carry on the vision, pounding away at the homelessness and lostness in the world today," Koslowsky said.

Today generations of the future take the hammer from tired hands and carry on the vision, pounding away at the homelessness and lostness in the world today.

—*Nathan Koslowsy*

Among those in the audience were Anna Ruth and Howard Beck. They were part of one of two Hesston Sunday school classes that birthed the vision for a disaster service in 1950. Sunday school classes from the Becks' Pennsylvania (now Whitestone) Mennonite Church and Hesston Mennonite Church held a summer picnic to discuss the idea, first called Mennonite Service Organization (MSO).

Some participants in Civilian Public Service during World War II wanted an avenue for disaster response, Anna Ruth said. But they never envisioned it would eventually spark an inter-Mennonite, continent-wide agency.

"We were just trying to be faithful," Anna Ruth said. "I don't think we gave it a lot of thought. We just did what we felt we could do and left the results to the Lord."

We just did what we felt we could do and left the results to the Lord.

—*Anna Ruth Beck*

The Becks remember MSO's first project in 1951, when more than 30 men from several Hesston-area Mennonite congregations sandbagged neighborhoods in nearby Wichita that were threatened by a flooding river.

The anniversary celebration included large-group sessions featuring keynote speakers, MDS regional representatives, recipients of disaster relief and representatives of other groups, such as the American Red Cross, Church World Service, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Friends Disaster Service and Salvation Army.

Louise Wideman (right), co-pastor at Whitestone Mennonite Church in Hesston, Kan., puts a Mennonite Service Organization armband on Lorraine Miller, a Whitestone member, during Mennonite Disaster Service's 50th anniversary celebration June 2-4 on the Hesston College campus. Miller was a member of one of the Sunday school classes that founded MDS—first called MSO—in 1950.

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Other Friday activities included workshops and an evening banquet attended by more than 1,100 people. On Saturday, participants took afternoon tours and attended evening reunions. A Sunday outdoor worship service and picnic concluded the celebration.

During the weekend, people often discussed how MDS could best pass the hammer of service to the next generation. Advanced technology has brought new possibilities, but a modern lifestyle has brought new challenges.

"We are moving from spontaneity and ... concern for others because of a motivation of servanthood to the need for more organization and structure to be able to respond to today's complex disaster scene," said C. Nelson Hostetter, who served from 1971 to 1986 as MDS's first full-time executive coordinator.

The Koslowskys showed that members of the younger generation are ready to meet those challenges. The Koslowskys grew up in Winnipeg, Nathan as a Mennonite Brethren and Danielle in a non-practicing Catholic home.

"In the world I grew up in, I never had to lift a finger to help anyone," Danielle said. "But I thank you, the original MDS, for building an organization that has given me the opportunity [to serve]."—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

Powerful and powerless praise MDS

Fifty years of service have also stretched Mennonites

HESSTON, Kan.—During Mennonite Disaster Service's (MDS) 50th anniversary celebration June 2-4, the organization received commendations from far and wide, including the White House.

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) director James Lee Witt, the U.S. government's top disaster-relief official and a Cabinet member, read a letter from President Clinton to a crowd of about 900 during the celebration's opening session on the Hesston College campus.

"Reaching out with generosity and compassion, you have helped people rebuild their homes, their lives and have brought the light of faith and hope wherever you have traveled," Clinton wrote. "I thank each of you for your commitment to serving your country and your fellow citizens. You have rightly earned the trust and abiding gratitude of so many families and communities you have assisted over the years. Best wishes for a wonderful anniversary celebration and continued success in the years to come."

Though FEMA uses the latest technology in is disaster-response efforts, Witt said, simple tools do the most important jobs.

"Our work really comes down to one universal tool that meets any challenge we may face. It's called a hammer," said Witt, a Baptist and former deacon in his home congregation in Arkansas. "For the Mennonite church, the hammer rings hope. In that powerful metaphor lies a very rich tradition of serving."

While accolades came from the highest halls of power, praise and thanks were also offered by communities rendered powerless by forces of nature—words no less significant than those from a president.

"People went through a shock and a trembling," Murray Morrow Jr. told the gathering, recalling when a tornado tore through his community in Birmingham, Ala. "You came in as a people that listened without criticizing or making judgments.

"You heard our cry and our need for help ... and brought peace and direction to our confused community. ... God came through you to us to help make us whole again."

In College Station, Ark., MDS not only rebuilt homes but also broke through barriers of racism. Prior to the March 1997 storm that ripped through the community, many residents had been skeptical of whites, said Hezekiah Stewart, an African Methodist Episcopal pastor in College Station.

But in the end, he said, "Racism suffered a defeat in College Station.

"I saw the Spirit of the Lord break down some crude and hardened hearts in College Station ... when people looked up and around them to find loving and caring people.

"With new memories in our hearts, we can become new people."

Pete and Mary Anne Friesen of Halbstadt, Man., spoke of how MDS workers cleared mud out of their basement and grief out of their lives. A flood ravaged the Friesens' home in April 1997, several months after Pete was injured in an industrial accident that took his brother Jack's life.

"If not for MDS, I couldn't have gone on," Pete said. "It was like we were in the water drowning and someone threw us a lifeline. They kept us afloat. They pulled us in."

While providing assistance in times of need, MDS work has also affected Mennonites.

"Like Abraham leaving Ur, MDS has called us out of snug, like-minded communities and thrust us into strange places with Southern Baptists and Pentecostals, Roman Catholics and Salvation Army, blacks and rednecks, government officials and Army recruits," said historian Robert Kreider in one of the celebrations's four main speeches.

"We are stretched in unexpected ways: on a river dike working alongside, even giving orders to, soldiers; repairing, of all places, a tobacco barn; an Old Order Amish grandfather playing Santa Claus to black children," said Kreider, of North Newton, Kan.

Other main speakers were Habitat for Humanity founder Millard Fuller of Americus, Ga.; retired Mennonite Central Committee worker and pastor Peter Dyck of Scottdale, Pa.; and retired pastor Peter Wiebe of Glendale, Ariz.—*Laurie L. Oswald and Paul Schrag for Meetinghouse*

> I saw the Spirit of the Lord break down some crude and hardened hearts in College Station ... when people looked up and around them to find loving and caring people.
>
> —*Hezekiah Stewart*

MDS photo by Ted Houser

Three workers fasten roofing panels to new homes during a youth project held in conjunction with Mennonite Disaster Service's 50th anniversary celebration June 2-4. Some 250 youth and sponsors from 20 youth groups built two houses at Morning Star Ranch, the home of a residential housing program for inner-city young men, located near Florence, Kan., about half an hour from Hesston, where the anniversary activities were held.

'We are not afraid, for God is with us'

Delegation celebrates Indonesians' faith through trials

JAKARTA, Indonesia—In Mennonite church after Mennonite church in Indonesia, the international visitors noticed pictures from the Martyrs Mirror, famed in dark wood and mounted prominently on the walls.

But the visitors also saw how Indonesian Mennonites can understand their religious roots in early Anabaptism's bloody theater four centuries earlier. On the island of Sumatra, a church plant has been unable to complete construction of a meetinghouse, blocked by community opposition. Eight years ago, the tiny chapel the congregation still uses was stoned and filled with human waste.

Despite the persecution, the congregation is growing, leading its youth choir to sing, "We are not afraid, for God is with us."

Before leaving, Luis Lumibao, a Filipino Mennonite, prayed, "May those who stoned this church come to know you, Jesus, the cornerstone."

Lumibao and 15 other Mennonites were part of an International Missions Association study trip to Indonesia. IMA is a global association of Anabaptist mission groups with connections to Eastern Mennonite Missions. The IMA trip had representatives from Ethiopia, Honduras, Hong Kong, Indonesia and Thailand, plus 10 people from EMM and Lancaster Conference.

"Did you know that 75 percent of all evangelical Christians in the world now live in Asia, Africa and Latin America?" EMM president Richard Showalter asked one gathering. "That's why we're here in Indonesia: to learn from the church in the South."

The trip was hosted by PIPKA, the mission board of the GKMI, one of three Indonesian Mennonite synods. Participants visited mission and church locations, talked with pastors and other church leaders and spoke in churches.

There are still 18 Indonesian provinces without a GKMI presence. We mustn't stop now.

—Yahya Chrismanto

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Dancers from one of nine GKMI congregations in Jakarta, Indonesia, help lead worship during a May 6 celebration of the 35th anniversary of PIPKA, the GKMI mission board.

The trip was held in conjunction with celebrations of PIPKA's 35th anniversary.

"Thirty-five years is a long enough time to mature," church planter Yahya Chrismanto told a May 6 assembly in Jakarta. "We're ready to take off and fly."

He reminisced about PIPKA's early years: its founding in 1965 with a vision to move beyond the GKMI's Chinese ethnic core in central Java, a faltering start, then joining in partnership with EMM, Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services and Mennonite Central Committee. PIPKA has started congregations in nine of Indonesia's 27 provinces.

"There are still 18 Indonesian provinces without a GKMI presence," Chrismanto said. "We mustn't stop now."

In a village on Sumatra, evangelist Pak Sutris told how he had been arrested and beaten 12 years ago for his work as an evangelist. "Our government asks us to choose Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism or Christianity," he said. "But when we choose to be Christians, they become angry."

After he was forced to dig latrines and stand for hours in the hot sun, the police eventually released Sutris, who is now an elder in a local GKMI congregation. "No matter what happens, I will always follow Jesus," he said. "He is the only way."—*EMM News Service*

IMA: Internationalizing mission efforts

The International Missions Association was born at Mennonite World Conference's 1997 assembly in Calcutta, India, as a way to increase internationalizing mission efforts. IMA is composed of Eastern Mennonite Missions and four Anabaptist mission-sending bodies with ties to EMM: Amor Viviente in Honduras, Meserete Kristos Church in Ethiopia and PIPKA, the mission board of the GKMI, one of three Indonesian Mennonite synods. IMA's Indonesia trip was the association's third. Previous visits were made to Honduras and Ethiopia.

Dutch urban worker drops in on U.S. colleagues looking for rest, reflection and ministry insight

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, Mo.—After 12 years, Jaap de Graaff needed a break. So he started a 12-week sabbatical from directing a drop-in center in the Netherlands by dropping in on urban mission colleagues in North America.

Commissioned by the mission board of the Dutch Mennonite Church, de Graaff serves as director and pastor of Inloophuis de Ruimte, a drop-in center in Almere, a city of 150,000 located 20 miles east of Amsterdam. Only 3 percent of Almere's population holds church membership.

The drop-in center offers people a cup of coffee or tea and conversation. Some who come through the door simply want company. Others suffer from mental illness, addictions or the loss of loved ones.

Once a month, the center holds an informal worship service with the local Mennonite congregation that used Inloophuis de Ruimte as its first worship space. The congregation grew out of a discussion group in the early 1980s.

The drop-in center also offers an emotional refuge for victims of incest. "We want to offer pastoral care," de Graaff says. "Psychiatric care is available in the city, but it's hard to get pastoral care for victims of incest within their own community because their pastor is also the pastor of the other person involved."

Working with people who have experienced trauma gradually took its toll on de Graaff. "I was exhausted," he says. "But it was as if the Lord made it clear to me to take my time. That comforts me. I shouldn't go on and burn out. I need time to stand back, think it over, contemplate and rest."

He arranged a 12-week sabbatical to reflect and to plan for the future. "After 12 years, I wanted some time to think it over," de Graaff says. "I wanted to think about how to proceed.

"My first assignment was to set up the center. The second task was to maintain it. Now it's time to ask, 'What should we do now?' My task is evolving with the work."

de Graaff

The first two weeks of his sabbatical were dedicated to learning from Mennonite mission colleagues in North America. De Graaff arrived in time to attend Mennonite Board of Missions' urban ministry directors and mission leaders meetings in Excelsior Springs, Mo., May 5-9. Then he spent nine days visiting Mennonite urban ministry sites in Los Angeles, Chicago and Buffalo, N.Y.

De Graaff also brought a proposal to North American mission colleagues from the Dutch Mennonite Church for an experienced urban ministry worker to come to Almere to help at the drop-in center. He also hopes the worker will symbolize a stronger link between urban mission efforts around the world.

De Graaff will spend the remainder of his 12-week sabbatical at home studying and discerning next steps for Inloophuis de Ruimte. *—Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

Urban ministry directors gather

The primary role of pastors should not be to lead church programs but rather to mentor new leaders and prepare congregations to minister to their communities, say church leaders directing such efforts in cities across the United States.

Urban ministry directors from seven conferences met May 5-6 at a retreat center near Excelsior Springs, Mo., to discuss models of leadership development from within congregations.

"The goal is to create leaders rather than maintain programs," said Hector Urbina, church planting and leadership development consultant for Mennonite Board of Missions.

In a presentation to the group, he said many congregations function with 20 percent or less of the members maintaining programs for the other 80 percent. Instead, congregations should strive to have 20 percent of the members equipping the remaining 80 percent to do ministry. —*MBM News Service*

MCC photo by Kathi Zellweger

Reading and writing

A North Korean student works on an assignment using supplies from Mennonite Central Committee. MCC earlier this year sent 5,560 combination health-school kits to schools and orphanages. "[They] don't even know the children, yet they help us," said one orphanage headmaster. MCC has also sent 7,380 blankets and in July hopes to ship 100 tons of canned beef.

Ex-prisoner remakes his life as a trader

INDOLA, Zambia—With an unemployment rate of about 60 percent, jobs are few and far between in Zambia. They are even scarcer for former inmates, who face the attitude that once a prisoner always a prisoner.

But Chalwe Mumba has provided his family a home and education, thanks to the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)-supported work of Prison Fellowship Zambia. The PFZ's micro-credit program helps ex-prisoners and their family members earn a living.

"Even my friends are surprised as to how I built my house," Mumba says.

An MCC worker serves as a consultant to the program, and MCC provided a $1,000 grant to PFZ to use as seed money for loans. An intensive eight-week business and entrepreneurship training course is offered, including basic accounting, marketing and management. Loans are repaid in 16 weekly installments.

After graduating from the eight-week business training course, Mumba received his first loan of $70. His plan was to buy material for "chitenges" (brightly colored cloth that Zambian women use as wrap-around skirts, for carrying babies and for headdresses) in town. Then he would trade one chitenge for two chickens in neighboring villages and sell the chickens back in town.

But Mumba underestimated the demand for his strategy. "Business was good because I dealt with very serious women," he says. Women in the villages clamored for the latest chitenge fashions, and he was soon trying to juggle 40 chickens at a time. His success induced two problems: transportation, for a bicycle was all Mumba had to carry all these chickens, and upstart competitors.

He successfully countered by trading one chitenge for five liters of beans and five liters of groundnuts, thereby increasing his profit margin and his business. "I had chitenge customers waiting by the village roads and customers in town waiting with cash," Mumba says.

His hurdles were not over, however. Beans and groundnuts were seasonal crops that ended two weeks before the conclusion of the 16-week repayment period. So Mumba started trading chitenges for goats: six chitenges for one adult goat, three chitenges for one kid. Makeshift bicycle baskets allowed him to carry one goat in front and two goats behind. Today he is trading in maize and is considering another PFZ loan to trade bicycles for cows.

From uncertain business prospects and immediate family responsibilities, Mumba, thanks to the PFZ loan program, now proudly says, "I can stand on my own."—*Mark Schroeder for MCC News Service*

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—Mandy Yoder, '99

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Israel denies entry to CPT member

CHICAGO—A Christian Peacemakers Team (CPT) member, bound to join the team in Hebron, West Bank, last month was denied entry into the country and sent back to the United States.

Cliff Kindy of North Manchester, Ind., was detained by airport security after he disembarked in Tel Aviv, Israel, on May 28 and put on a return flight the next day. Kindy, a CPT member since 1990, had been arrested during West Bank assignments in 1995 and 1997.

CPT has three team members in Hebron. *—CPT News Service*

Youth magazine named award winner

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—*With,* the youth magazine published by Faith & Life Press, has received an Award of Merit from the Evangelical Press Association. The award, given in the youth category, was made at EPA's annual meeting May 7-10 in Nashville.

With has taken home the award in three of the past four years. The award is based on writing, content and design. *Campus Life* took home the category's top honor, the Award of Excellence, which *With* received in 1997. *Breakaway*, the youth magainze of Focus on the Family, also won an Award of Merit.

In other EPA awards, J. Nelson Kraybill, president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., received fourth place in the biblical exposition category for "Apocalypse Now," about Revelation, published in the Oct. 25, 1999, issue of *Christianity Today.—GCMC News Service*

Seminary receives reaccreditation

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite Seminary has been reaccredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) until the fall of 2009.

ATS approved the seminary's master of divinity program and master of arts programs in Christian leadership, religion and pastoral counseling. Also approved was the extension site in Lancaster, Pa., and the offering of as many as four distance education courses.

by the way ...

The first four volumes of the Mennonite Encyclopedia, completed in 1955, devoted 18 columns of text to nonresistance and none to peace; the fifth volume, released in 1990, gave 13 columns to peace and two to nonresistance.—*Mennonites in the Global Village* by Leo Driedger

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Workers

Castellanos, Armando and Eunice Perez, Aibonito, Puerto Rico, are beginning one-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignments in Riohacha Guajira, Colombia, as church project support workers.

Chermack, Eva, Millersville, Pa., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as assistant director of Visitors Exchange Program.

Hershey, Ron, Mechanicsburg, Pa., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as regional sales manager for Ten Thousand Villages.

Horning, Chad, has been named co-manager of Mennonite Mutual Aid's equity portfolios for Praxis Growth Fund and for Mennonite Foundation, MMA Capital Management and Mennonite Retirement Trust.

Jantzen, Jim, Newton, Kan., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in North Newton, Kan., as service program administrator.

McDowell, Judith, Waterloo, Iowa, is beginning a three-year MCC assignment in Vietnam as an English teacher.

Wiebe, Menno, Akron, Pa., is beginning a five-year MCC assignment in Jordan as country representative.

Nussbaum, John Mark, has been named co-manager of MMA's equity portfolios for Praxis Growth Fund and for Mennonite Foundation, MMA Capital Management and Mennonite Retirement Trust.

Births

Aeschliman, Stetson Lee, May 2, to John and Lisa (Graf) Aeschliman, Wauseon, Ohio.

Augspurger, Sydney Elizabeth, May 4, to Chris and Jodi (Shearer) Augspurger, Dalton, Ohio.

Beachy, Jonas Shenk, May 11, to Alicia and Linford Shenk Beachy, Denver.

Dannen, Jack Franklin, March 14, to Allen and Amy (Landis) Dannen, Lebanon, Ore.

Gerber, Natalie Catherine, May 12, to Dawn (Hochstetler) and Doug Gerber, Nappanee, Ind.

Grieser Elijah Lee, May 7, to Carrie Dunham and Tim Grieser, Archbold, Ohio.

Holsopple, Daniel Leon and Rebekah Ann (twins), May 23, to Beth (Waidelich) and William Holsopple, Wauseon, Ohio.

Huebert, Reid Henry, May 24, to Jerry and Pamela (Richards) Huebert, Aurora, Neb.

Jones, Regan Noelle, April 18, to Ruth (Baumgartner) and Todd Jones, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Leonard, Anisa Joy, Aug. 21, 1999, received for adoption May 10, 2000, by Glenda (Kratz) and John Leonard, Nairobi, Kenya.

Martin, Amelia Claire, May 21, to Jane and Steve Martin, Harrisonburg, Va.

Miller, Kyle Steven, April 14, to Melanie (Swartzentruber) and Steven Miller, Nampa, Idaho.

Minter, Laura Elizabeth, March 4, to Douglas and Jill (Benedict) Minter, Louisville, Colo.

Perich, Courtney Marie, May 14, to Jim and Pat (Glick), Red Deer, Alta.

Pipkin, Mia Nicole, May 2, to Joseph and Shannon (Sims) Pipkin, Newport News, Va.

Richardson, Stephen Daniel, May 15, to Cyndi (Friesen) and Paul Richardson, Malang, Indonesia.

Rohrer, Regan Victoria, May 16, to Chad and Sharon (Brubaker) Rohrer, Manheim, Pa.

Scarboro, Eric Scott, May 5, to Jeff and Vicki (Stoltzfus) Scarboro, Aurora, Colo.

Schmieder, Mitchell Joseph, April 30, to Candi and Doug Schmieder, Marengo, Iowa.

Sikora, Hannah Nicole, April 23, to Elizabeth (Harkins) and John Sikora, Pierceton, Ind.

Smucker, Andrew Ross, May 11, to Brenda (Martin) and Darrell Smucker, Wooster, Ohio.

Stichter, Justin Michael, May 17, to Becky (Yoder) and Frank Stichter, Goshen, Ind.

Stinson, Emily Kate, May 12, to Craig and Susan (Grasse) Stinson, Edmonton.

Wicker, Jacob Alan and Thomas James (twins), March 13, to Edward and Kerry-Lea (Friesen) Wicker, Hickory, N.C.

Marriages

Aeschliman/Beck: Doug Aeschliman, Archbold, Ohio, and JoDee Beck, Wauseon, Ohio, May 27 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Bernath/Short: Andrea Bernath, Archbold, Ohio, and Doug Short, Archbold, May 13 at St. Peter's Catholic Church, Archbold.

Bond/Youssef: Karen Bond, Lansdale, Pa., and Gideon Youssef, Telford, Pa., May 13 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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Cameron/Fultz: Malinda Cameron, Fort Wayne, Ind., and Matthew Fultz, Indianapolis, May 20 at Maplewood Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne.

Case/Denton: Jeffrey Case, Hutchinson, Kan., and Stacy Denton, Hutchinson, May 20 at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Copley/Poolman: Iletha Copley, Rittman, Ohio, and Rodney Poolman, Scotts, Mich., May 6 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Dickey/Jensen: Faye Dickey, Omaha, Neb., and Donald Jensen, Decatur, Ill., May 13 at Boulder (Colo.) Mennonite Church.

Fleming/Stuckey: Mindy Fleming, Bryan, Ohio, and Scott Stuckey, Bryan, May 6 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Rupp/Wyse: Jeff Rupp, Wauseon, Ohio, and Becky Wyse, Stryker, Ohio, May 13 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker.

Schmabel/Yoder: Joerg Schmabel, Berlin, Germany, and Angie Yoder, Wellman, Iowa, April 8 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Deaths

Dick, Bernard Peter, 90, Mountain Lake, Minn., died May 14. Spouse: Elizabeth Epp Dick. Parents: Peter and Margarita Heppner Dick (deceased). Other survivors: children Kathleen Martens, Charles, Richard; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 18 at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake.

Fast, Alvin, 70, Reedley, Calif., died May 20 of cancer. Spouse: Doris Janzen Fast. Parents: Henry and Katherine Fast (deceased). Other survivors: children Gail Harder, Brad, Greg; eight grandchildren. Funeral: May 26 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Glanzer, Clarence, 67, Freeman, S.D., died May 13. Spouse: Shirley Wollman Glanzer. Parents: Joseph and Theresa Kleinsasser Glanzer (deceased). Other survivors: children Patricia Falk, Randy, Charles, Brenda Lilliston; four grandchildren. Funeral: May 16 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Gotwals, Jacob Schueck, 89, Souderton, Pa., died May 13. Spouse: Eva Kulp Gotwals (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Carroll, John, Clayton, Martha Postma, Paul; 12 grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 19 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Hartzler, Roy Emerson, 93, Hesston, Kan., died May 3. Spouse: Katie Hartzler (deceased). Parents: Simon and Magdalene Hartzler (deceased). Survivors: children Ruth Martin, Freda Friesen, Isabelle Blough, David, Philip, Dwight, Marty; 14 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 10 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Hostetler, Katie Yoder, 86, Allensville, Pa., died May 11. Spouse: Paul Hostetler (deceased). Parents: Amos and Emma Peachey Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Betty. Funeral: May 14 at Allensville Mennonite Church.

Jutzi, Eileen Musselman, 78, Kitchener, Ont., died May 13. Spouse: Munro Jutzi (deceased). Parents: Israel and Adeline Musselman (deceased). Survivors: children Karen Balmer, Dennis, Jeff; six grandchildren. Funeral: May 17 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

King, Edwin William, 85, Lebanon, Ore., died May 4 of cancer. Spouse: Gretchen Hickman King (deceased). Parents: Bert and Ada Hartley King (deceased). Survivors: son George; three grandchildren. Funeral: May 8 at Lebanon Mennonite Church.

Kopp, Harold, 84, Lancaster, Pa., died May 13. Spouse: Ruth Becker Kopp. Parents: Christian and Irene Derfler Kopp (deceased). Other survivors: foster sons Barry Peters, Daniel Peters; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 17 at East Petersburg (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Lais, John, 86, Lebanon, Ore., died May 9 of a stroke. Spouse: Barbara Kropf Lais. Parents: Daniel and Ellen Egli Lais (deceased). Other survivors: children Daniel, Idella Mukasa, Irene Bornman; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 12 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

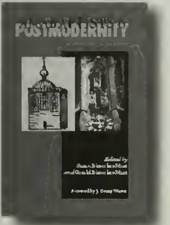
Oswald, Orie, 90, Walnut Creek, Ohio, died May 10. Spouse: Emma Lucille Miller Oswald (deceased). Parents: Adam and Lucy Troyer Oswald (deceased). Survivors: children LaRue, Eleanor Gray; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Memorial service: May 13 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

Peiffer, Louise Reschly Nisly, 58, Wellman, Iowa, died May 8 from a car-tractor accident. Spouse: Gary Peiffer. Parents: Ralph and Irene Imhof Reschly. Other survivors: children Cynthia Nisly, Keith Nisly. Funeral: May 12 at Wellman Mennonite Church.

Pletcher, Ruth, 77, Phoenix, died May 6 of congestive heart failure. Parents: Amasa and Maude Pletcher (deceased). Funeral: May 9 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale, Ariz.

Schmidt, Anna Ediger, 83, Buhler, Kan., died May 22. Spouse: Arnold Schmidt (deceased). Parents: Solomon and Agnes Friesen Ediger (deceased). Survivors: children Arlo, Larry, Judy Goering, Marilyn Flaming; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: May 26 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Steiger, Howard, 93, Hopedale, Ill, died May 14. Spouse: Mary Hanck Steiger. Parents: Henry and Emma Iutzi Steiger (deceased). Other survivors: children Ralph, Henry, Ruth Rogers, Linda Springer; eight grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 17 at Boynton Mennonite Church, Hopedale.



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- **Elementary school teachers needed!** Mennonite Voluntary Service is looking for people interested in teaching K-7 at ***Hopi Mission School***, Kykotsmovi, Ariz., beginning August 2000. Please inquire at MVS, 316-283-5100 or email <mvs@gcmc.org>.

- **Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries** is taking applications for the ***director of ministerial leadership services*** position, a half-time assignment managing the pastor-calling system (resumes and references for pastor candidates) and serving conference ministers in the Mennonite Church USA. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

  Send resume and references by July 1 to Everett Thomas, MBCM, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245; email <vrtt@juno.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks a ***graphic designer***. 12-month, full-time position. Bachelor's degree in art, communications, graphic arts or related field required. At least three years in graphic design required. Will be involved in all aspects of creating printed material for the university, focusing on the more complex projects.

  For more information view our website: <www.emu.edu>. Application deadline: July 15, 2000. EMU Human Resources, 540-432-4108; hyperlink mail to <restoa@emu.edu>.

- **Sharing Programs Inc.**, Lancaster, Pa., a property/casualty mutual aid program, seeks ***department leader for finance/information systems***. Requires 5-10 yrs. work experience in accounting, business and/or finance; bachelor's degree in same, info systems or related field; 3-5 yrs. in management; knowledge of client/server and PC network technology. Insurance experience desirable.

  Send resume to Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367; email <hr@splmc.com>. Visit <www.sharingprograms.com>.

- **Mid-sized family-owned business** based in northeastern Ohio Mennonite community seeks a ***president***. Responsibilities include the overall leadership and direction of restaurants, hotel, gift shops and a food processing facility. Ideal candidate will have good written and oral communication skills, be a proven leader of a successful organization, understand and respect Amish-Mennonite culture, possess knowledge of financial analysis and management, have an MBA and/or experience as a general manager or president of a medium-to-large corporation. Salary is competitive, based on prior experience, and a generous benefit package includes 401K and stock options.

  Send resume, cover letter and references to Len Geiser, Len Geiser & Associates, 610 Revere Drive, Goshen, IN 46526; email <lenrg@goshen.edu>.

- **Lake Center Christian School** (K-8) in Hartville, Ohio, is accepting applications for an ***elementary/middle school music teacher***. A part-time or full-time position is available. Fax resumes to Matt McMullen, Principal, 330-877-2040; or call 330-877-2049.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** (gr. 6-12; enrollment 345) invites applications for the following teaching positions for 2000-01: ***6th grade, social studies 7 & 8, high school English, orchestra, Spanish, German*** (60-75%). Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <dueckak@hotmail.com>.

- **Bethany Christian Schools** invites applications for the position of ***assistant principal***, beginning July 1, 2000. The assistant principal serves as assistant to the chief administrator for a growing school with 45 faculty and staff and current enrollment of 345 students in grades 6-12. Candidates should be people deeply committed to Christian faith as interpreted by the Mennonite Church and should possess a vision for Christian education. Responsibilities include overseeing the school's daily operations, student discipline, teacher supervision and leadership of the middle school program. Candidates should hold, or be prepared to obtain, administrative licensure in Indiana. Administrative experience is preferred.

  Contact Allan Dueck, Principal, 2904 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-534-2567; fax 219-533-0150; email <dueckak@hotmail.com>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks a ***director of the academic support center***, who serves as academic adviser for conditionally admitted students and coordinates the student advocacy program for conditional students. Supervises student disabilities services for students with documented learning disabilities. Teaches in the undergraduate program. Master's degree in English or education required. EMU seeks faculty who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices.

  Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Marie Morris, Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email <dean@emu.edu>. Review will begin immediately. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Western Mennonite School** is seeking qualified faculty and staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered educational setting. Western (grades 6-12) is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley in the Northwest. For more information, contact Principal Eric Martin, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000; email <Martines@teleport.com>.

  Summer 2000: ***Business manager:*** full-time position to manage business affairs and supervise personnel; budgeting, accounting and technical experience necessary. ***Assistant principal:*** part-time position; responsibilities include supervision of instruction and curriculum for expanding middle school and high school programs. May be combined with teaching duties for full-time position. ***Facilities manager:*** full-time position; management and supervisory experience necessary to lead a team that maintains and cares for facilities, plant and grounds. The campus includes 6 buildings with multiple parking lots, driveways and 40 acres of forested property.

  Fall 2000: ***Spanish instructor:*** level I, II and III; may also include ESL instruction. ***Health and PE instructor:*** middle school and high school levels, coaching interest desired. ***Assistant girls resident director:*** full-time voluntary service position; focus on team-oriented youth ministry. Responsibilities include counseling and assisting in coordination of activities. Housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided. ***Boys soccer coach:*** head varsity.

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by Gordon Houser

A list of books and other resources to help us in our Christian lives:

God's Great Outdoors: Faith Building Family Activities by Wes Hamm (Faith & Life Press and Herald Press, 2000, $2.95) and *Jonah and God's Big Love: A Learning Experience for Adults and Children* by Eleanor Snyder and Allan Rudy-Froese (Faith & Life Press and Herald Press, 2000, $6.95) provide innovative ways for children and adults to learn together. *God's Great Outdoors* guides families through 12 fun experiences around such topics as rain, gardens, woods, hiking and "car-time." *Jonah and God's Big Love* is designed for small groups, cell churches, a vacation setting or individual families and can be adapted for an intergenerational elective or camp curriculum.

Beyond the News: Facing Death (Mennonite Media, 2000, $24.95) is a 34-minute video full of stories of people who have faced death and the lessons they have learned. It comes with a study guide. Contact Mennonite Media, 1251 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22801, <mm@mennomedia.org>.

Living Before God: Deepening Our Sense of the Divine Presence by Ben Campbell Johnson (Eerdmans, 2000, $15) explores ways of being with God, listening to God and attending to the divine presence.

Mennonites in the Global Village by Leo Driedger (University of Toronto Press, 2000, $24.95) explores the impact of professionalism and individualism on Mennonite communities, cultures, families and religion, particularly in light of the scholarly work of futurists Alvin and Heidi Tofler.

Even More Little Stories for Little Children: A Worship Resource by Donna McKee Rhodes (Herald Press, 2000, $7.99) features easy-to-find objects and Scripture-based stories and includes a Scripture index that spans all three books in the series.

A Mennonite Church Mobilized in Mission (Mennonite Media, 2000) is a 12-minute video that profiles the Consultation on Missional Identity, which brought together about 200 participants March 24-26 in Harrisonburg, Va. A copy has been sent to each congregation in the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church, inviting feedback about the implications of new mission structures on congregational mission.

Mennonite Life is now an online magazine. It can be accessed at the following web address: <www.bethelks.edu/mennonitelife/>. The first issue, dated March 2000, includes excerpts from Duane K. Friesen's book *Artists, Citizens, Philosophers: Seeking the Shalom of the City: An Anabaptist Culture*. The June issue includes fiction by Gordon Houser, *The Mennonite*'s associate editor for features.

What Happens in Holy Communion? by Michael Welker (Eerdmans, 2000, $18) gives a clear explanation of Holy Communion based on the biblical tradition and evaluates the ecumenical discourse on Communion of the past 30 years.

Downtown Monks: Sketches of God in the City by Albert Holtz (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $10.95) tells the story of a monastery in downtown Newark, N.J., where Benedictine monks have lived, prayed and taught for almost 150 years.

Beyond the Agenda: Add a Spiritual Dimension to Ordinary Church Meetings by Jessie Schut (CRC Publications, 2000, $7.95) presents a model for small group meetings "more reflective of the body of Christ." The book also includes 28 devotions around three themes: "Called to Lead," "Called to Serve" and "Called Together."

Recommended reading

Tasting the Dust **by Jean Janzen (Good Books, 2000, $9.95) is the latest collection of poems by Janzen, whose work has been published on numerous occasions in** ***The Mennonite*****. She is at the height of her powers here, exploring the mystery of the mundane and the mystical, the interplay of the physical and spiritual. The title poem begins with the intimate—"Sweat drips into my eyes / from his forehead, physician / curing himself with soil"—then moves to the universal: "the story of dust" and "the wet roar of ages / under the slow beat of the sun." Janzen's lush language is both musical and profound. Her poems are accessible, yet they reward rereading.—*****gh***

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J. Lorne Peachey

The long view

Listen in on many everyday conversations, and you'll pick up a recurring theme. If life is going well, it can't last forever. Pleasant weather, a surge in the stock market, good health, whatever—common wisdom has it that we'll pay some day for good things now coming our way.

By contrast, when things aren't going well—illness strikes, a wrong decision results in failure, it rains on our parade—our talk seldom reflects hope for something better. We're much more likely to dwell on the bad, maybe even expect worse.

Life is full of disappointments. Dreams often go unfulfilled. That's surely the way generations of Russian people must have felt as they lived for centuries with cruel governments in their country. Yet out of this oppression they have reason to hope today.

Every time leadership changed in that country in the past, there was violence. This May, however, the Russian government changed hands without a shot being fired. Hope for peace, long dormant, prevailed.

I find the Russian experience a reminder that life won't always be difficult, that good things do come our way. Often, however, we miss new opportunities and joys because we are so focused on what is out of joint.

For Christians especially, faith is knowing that our current condition, whatever it is, will get better—if not in this life, then in the next. The apostle Paul put it this way: "Our present troubles are quite small and won't last very long" (2 Corinthians 4:17 NLT).

That is our hope as Christians. That is the long view, made possible by faith in Jesus Christ. May it permeate all of life, including our everyday conversations.—*jlp*

Pony express and email

One of this publication's current troubles we hope won't last very long is timely delivery of each week's issue. It used to be a small problem, but it seems to be getting larger.

At least the number of complaints we get are increasing. "I wonder if my postal delivery person is so fascinated with Mennonites that he is keeping our issues," one reader writes. Another from the West Coast accuses us of keeping subscription rates high so we have money to buy hay for the ponies he thinks are being used to deliver his copies of *The Mennonite*—often two weeks late.

Since its inception on Feb. 17, 1998, *The Mennonite* has been printed on Thursdays and mailed on Fridays. Only one issue in 112 has been delayed; we pulled that one because we found too many mistakes after printing. Though we mail on time, we can't guarantee on-time arrival after an issue leaves our dock.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) has told us that by mailing on Friday most U.S. readers should have their issue by Tuesday. Increased mail volume, however, makes that more and more difficult to achieve.

There is recourse. If you are experiencing delivery problems, keep the labels of three issues, noting the date of arrival of each. Take these to the local post office and ask them to check the reason for late delivery. If that doesn't make a difference, send the information to us, and we'll work with the USPS from our end. That has worked for some readers in the past.

If what we produce each week can't get through any sooner, we do have faster ways for readers to reach us. It is now possible to subscribe, renew subscriptions or give gift subscriptions to others through our web site: <www.mph.org/themennonite>. We can also take name and address changes via the web. Currently we will bill you for subscriptions, but a credit card option will be available soon.

Congregations can also use our web site to send us information for births, marriages and deaths. When doing so, please give all the information requested—making especially sure the spellings of names are correct—so that we can have an accurate listing.

We have set up these services to facilitate communication and ease of access. We do not yet have all of each week's *The Mennonite* on the web to deliver our news and information to you even faster, but an e-zine is in our dreaming. Someday we may even be able to do away with the pony express.—*jlp*

Did you know ...

... that all couples whose wedding announcements are included in our marriages column receive a free six-month subscription to *The Mennonite*? For this reason, we need a complete address for newlyweds, even though we list only city and state.

To send us marriage announcements via the worldwide web, go to <http://www.mph.org/themennonite> and click on "submit notices."

theMennonite
June 20, 2000

a journey to peace

From ROTC to VS:
Janessa Cobb and David Deal

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16 If it is to be, it is up to me

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Money talks

In the May 23 "Readers Say," L. Emil Kreider asks those who protested against the World Bank and International Monetary Fund in Washington to reconsider their charge that IMF-imposed devaluations are harmful to a nation's economy. Kreider argues that these devaluations are necessary to avoid an overvalued currency, which would lead to inflation and bankruptcies.

Kreider assumes that IMF policies are in the best interest of Third World nations. If we look at the evidence, however, it becomes quite clear that these policies have little to do with the interests of those in the Third World and everything to do with increasing the returns on the investments of international speculators. Currency devaluation makes a nation's exports more competitive, providing higher returns to investors in the new export sectors of the economy. (The IMF generally steers nations away from producing goods for domestic consumption. Feeding, educating and housing the poor is just not as profitable.)

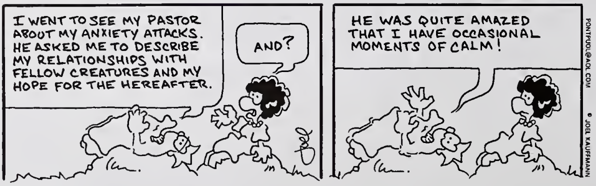
What is interesting is that during the Asian and Brazilian economic crises, nations were encouraged to raise interest rates to avoid devaluation. This increased the chances that investors would be repaid. The IMF does not consistently encourage devaluation. What is consistent is that its policies are based on the needs of investors rather than of populations.

It is also interesting that Kreider chose only to deal with devaluations. There are many other complaints against the IMF and World Bank: that their investing shows little concern for environmental costs, that demands that countries gut social programs under "austerity measures" deprive people of health and education services, that they are horribly undemocratic and their decision making is secretive. These are just a few issues, and all are easily supported by examples too numerous to list here.

The same weekend as thousands descended on Washington, the G77, a group of the world's 133 poorest nations, met in Havana. The G77's statements echoed what the protesters in the streets were saying: The IMF and World Bank put investors first, all else behind. If Kreider will not listen to thousands of activists, perhaps he will consider the leaders of 80 percent of the world's population.—*Josiah Groff, Lancaster, Pa.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


I WENT TO SEE MY PASTOR ABOUT MY ANXIETY ATTACKS. HE ASKED ME TO DESCRIBE MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH FELLOW CREATURES AND MY HOPE FOR THE HEREAFTER.
AND?
HE WAS QUITE AMAZED THAT I HAVE OCCASIONAL MOMENTS OF CALM!
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Generalized differences

Gordon Houser, in his May 16 article "An Integrated Marriage," seems to generalize differences of worship and faith practices of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. Through Jama's and Shane's congregational experiences, Houser infers that areas such as music style, women in ministry, use of family name, inclusive language and conflict resolution are uniquely practiced by GCs or MCs.

As I have observed life in the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, understandings and practices in these dimensions seem to be more closely linked to orientations of locales, congregations and families, rather than normative differences between the two churches. It is interesting to ponder how the integration process would be evolving if the differences between our two groups were as sharply defined as Houser interprets them. If our differences were this acute, integration procedures may never have been initiated.

Blessings upon Jama and Shane as they seek to be God's faithful people in our evolving community of faith.—*Kathryn F. Seitz, Reedley, Calif.*

Unconditional love

I have been following the concerns about the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church for many moons now. I cannot believe that human beings can be so judgmental. Where is the unconditional love in the church, which Jesus so beautifully portrayed?

If every lesbian and gay person would be authentic and stand up and be counted, there would not be any negotiation, maybe no conferences, maybe no Mennonite churches. Maybe we would just all love each other the way Jesus did and have only one conference. He associated with everyone. When did we get the throne to condemn and judge others? Would someone with theological understanding of the Bible tell me where Jesus (not any

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

of the other writers) condemned gay and lesbian people? We don't even have all the books that were written printed in the King James Version. We don't have the complete story.

May we know and feel the unconditional love of Christ in all peoples.—*Edith Derstine Tully, Seattle*

To weed or not to weed?

For Gospel guidance on membership in the transformed church, I'll go to the parable of the tares (weeds) in Matthew 13:24-30. The content is summarized in the owner's command for the servants not to remove the enemy's weeds from the grain field. Let them grow together until the harvest lest servants pull up valuable grain stalks with the tares.

The separating task is not assigned to the planters (us). The sorting, expelling and disposing responsibility is in the Master's control. And he says he will send his angels to do the job. The angels will become the harvesters or the reapers. Both the time for the separating and disposing is after our time in the season. And the people to carry on the separation are not called disciples but angels. Let us be busy at the task of the great commision (Matthew 28:19-20), preaching the good news of the gospel and making disciples everywhere. However hard it may be for us, let us also be obedient to let the angels take up the sorting and disposing process under the lordship of the Son of Man. To focus otherwise is not in harmony with Jesus' teaching in the parable of the tares.

Though the current Mennonite trends away from harsh discipline may at times suggest to some waywardness and less faithfulness, let us consider that we may be rather moving toward more accurate observance of the parable of the tares.—*Paul H. Martin, Des Moines, Iowa*

Cover photo courtesy of David Deal

From ROTC to VS

David Deal's journey to peace

by Melvin D. Schmidt

A letter dated Aug. 2, 1993, written by David A. Deal Sr., pleaded on behalf of his son and namesake, asking that David A. Deal Jr. be granted a noncombatant conscientious objector status in the U.S. Navy, thus permitting the son to serve his country without bearing arms. For 31 years the father had been a federal agent in the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. He had often put his own life on the line and "had to resort to the use of deadly force in my employment," he wrote. Conscientious objection went against every bone in his body.

"I disagree with Dave for applying as a conscientious objector and am embarrassed because I associate it with individuals I knew during the Vietnam era," wrote the father. "This has not been easy for me or my family, but I do believe in Dave's sincerity without question. There has been misconception and anguish, but I believe that Dave now has peace of mind."

David A. Deal Jr. grew up in a devout, Bible-believing family. Until the age of 16 he was regularly found in the family's Southern Baptist congregation until their move to Matthews, N.C., where the family subsequently joined a United Methodist congregation. Dave was, by any measure, a model son and a high achiever. As the father wrote, "Even as a child he related passages to me from the Bible, and I was astounded by some of his thoughts and beliefs, which he could always support." David Jr. excelled in Boy Scouts and baseball. He decided early that he wanted to earn his college degree at Duke University, an institution with high academic standards and strong Methodist ties.

The cost of a college education at Duke was more than $20,000 per year, which David knew his family could not afford. But David had ambitions to work for NASA and possibly be an astronaut. For such ambitions, he would have to prove himself at a prestigious university. His dreams came true when he received a full Navy scholarship at Duke.

Later, his father wrote in his appeal to the Navy, "One of the happiest days of my life was when [David Jr.] graduated from Duke University with honors. However, one of the most disappointing days of my life was when he was not commissioned as a naval officer with his graduating NROTC [Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps] class."

David's conscientious refusal to be commissioned in the U.S. Navy came through a long and arduous process, beginning in his freshman year at Duke when he became involved with the Wesley Fellowship, a United Methodist campus ministry. By the spring semester of his sophomore year, he went public with his increasing awareness concerning military matters. Even though he was on a full Navy scholarship, he attended prayer vigils that were occurring on the front steps of the Duke University chapel during the Gulf War. "I would often go, even in uniform," he says. "I suppose that I thought I was making a bit of a statement by being there in uniform—both to the 'Wesleyites,' that just because a person's in the military doesn't mean they don't pray for peace, and to my fellow ROTC midshipmen, that we should let it be known when we disagree with a war."

Change of heart: David describes his change of heart as a slow process, nurtured by his continuing relationship with the Wesleyites at Duke. He attended the meetings of the Wesley Fellowship, then under the leadership of David O. (Olie) Jenkins, who himself was an avowed pacifist. David became a leader in the group. He read and found himself profoundly changed by the writings of John Howard Yoder (*The Politics of Jesus*), Stanley Hauerwas (*Resident Aliens*) and Thomas Merton (*My Argument With the Gestapo*). Several movies also affected him: *Romero* and *The Mission*.

David read writers in the United Methodist tradition, such as Stephen Long (*Living the Discipline*), and he researched officially adopted United Methodist Church statements on war and peace and found, to his amazement, that these statements supported and encouraged his pacifist interpretation of the teachings of Jesus. He kept in his possession statements from such sources as the *Book of Discipline* and the *Book of Resolutions* of the United Methodist Church.

As important as were the writings of scholars and statements of the church, the capstone in the building up of David's convictions came in the spring of 1993, when he joined a group of Duke students in a service and study trip to Honduras. There he studied the effects of the United States' military presence and interviewed various people who knew about the frequent U.S. military interventions in Central America. He witnessed the ruined lives of people being exploited by American policies and actions, many of which were breaches of international law. "I saw mothers who had to decide which child to feed," he wrote, and "I saw

I heard the stories and saw the effects of the repression by the Honduran government and military, with the support of the U.S. government and military, supposedly in the name of democracy and in the interest of national security.

—David Deal

Intentional Christians: Janessa Cobb and David Deal

adults and children withering away with no medical treatment, listened to stories of women whose children and husbands 'disappeared' because they endorsed views contrary to those of the government of Honduras (and the United States). I heard the stories and saw the effects of the repression by the Honduran government and military, with the support of the U.S. government and military, supposedly in the name of democracy and in the interest of national security."

He returned from the Honduras trip knowing he would have to make some tough decisions. He decided that noncombatant service within the Navy would be one way to take care of his obligation. He knew the alternative would be to break his contract with the Navy and find himself saddled with college debts. His counseling with Olie led him to take the more radical step. The chaplain advised him to make the decision as if there were no money involved, and that is what David did. He asked for a leave of absence from the Navy to enter Mennonite Voluntary Service. During his year of service he came to the decision that he could not be commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Navy.

Commitment to nonviolence: During the arduous process of decision making, David struggled with still another possible response. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. Navy was caught in a situation of needing to downsize at a time when full college scholarships were still being provided for more students than they needed. Many people in the class after David's at Duke found themselves free of their obligations to repay their college indebtedness, as well as free of any further obligations for active duty in the Navy. This created a situation in which David might simply do nothing and wait it out, hoping he would not be assigned. It was a dicey game, but David decided he could not play it. Instead, he made a straightforward application for conscientious objector status and described his commitment to nonviolence in clear language, regardless of the consequences.

David applied to Mennonite Board of Missions for placement in a voluntary service unit. He was accepted and placed in Washington. He committed himself to a life of voluntary poverty, service to the poor and lower levels of consumption. He became a vegetarian because he believes consumption of meat ultimately exploits the poor and landless people around the world, since it takes 21 pounds of grain to produce one pound of beef.

In Washington he met Janessa Cobb, an MVS worker from Archbold, Ohio. They joined Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church in June 1995 and were married in May 1997. David now manages the community services division of a computer business, helping nonprofit organizations upgrade and maintain their information systems. Janessa completed her master's degree in social work at Howard University in Washington and is working in foster care. David and Janessa are both actively involved in the Hyattsville Church, where they are sponsors of a successful youth ministry and where David is an elder in the congregation. David and Janessa live in an intentional Christian community in Washington's inner city. They share meals and resources with a group of seven adults and two children.

David and his father have maintained a strong relationship in spite of their differences in lifestyle. David Sr. has been open to change and growth in understanding, and is now supportive of David Jr.'s pacifism.

Several years after David entered voluntary service, he received his bill from the Navy. He was told that he must repay $58,000 in college indebtedness. For a person living in voluntary poverty, this is an enormous debt, but David has never thought he was being unfairly treated, even though many of his classmates at Duke were released from their obligations to the Navy as well as their college debts because the Navy did not need all the recruits they had trained. The Hyattsville Church committed itself to help David make his payments (see box at right). Together with matching grants from Mennonite Mutual Aid, more than $1,000 per year has been given to David to help him retire his debt. His computer company is doing well, but David's personal commitment is the opposite of making a lot of money. He serves the underserved and charges as little as possible rather than as much as possible for his services.

Melvin D. Schmidt is pastor at Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church.

Several years after David entered voluntary service, he received his "bill" from the U.S. Navy. He was told that he must repay $58,000 in college indebtedness. For a person living in voluntary poverty, this is an enormous debt.

A mutual aid fund has been established at Hyattsville Mennonite Church, 4217 East-West Highway, Hyattsville, MD 20782. This fund is administered by the congregation to help members with special needs. Helping David pay off his college debts is the commitment of the church until the debt is retired. Contributions from the wider church are gratefully accepted. Checks should be made payable to Hyattsville Mennonite Church and marked "mutual aid fund."

Why I joined the Million Mom March

by Anne Myer Byler

KIDS
WITH
GUN
MOM
MARC

Maria and Rose Myer Byler are ready to march with their mother, Anne, who stands behind the camera, at the Million Mom March in Washington on Mother's Day.

Most people who own a gun have it for hunting or target shooting, and they will make sure it is safely stored. They will definitely keep it away from children, like medicine bottles and household cleaners. And when their children are old enough they will teach those children how to safely operate that gun. For some, gun control may sound a little like government invading privacy.

Why then did so many people go to Washington over the Mother's Day weekend to ask for more laws concerning guns?

Seen the news lately? Columbine High School, Thurston High School, West Paducah High School, Wedgewood Baptist Church, Myers High School, Buell Elementary School and on and on.

For each one of these incidents, the pain ripples from families and close friends to entire communities. People mourn the senselessness of these deaths—deaths that involved no germs, no diseases, no afflictions from long life, not even longstanding animosity, only troubled people with easy access to guns.

Walking together: According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American children under 15 years old are 12 times more likely to die from gunfire than children in 25 other industrialized countries combined. So when I heard that mothers and others concerned about gun violence would be walking together in Washington on Mother's Day to ask for better gun laws, I decided to go. I wanted to witness to Jesus' way by walking with them, along with my 9- and 11-year-old daughters and my mother.

Groups such as the National Rifle Association (NRA) say guns are not at fault: "Guns don't kill people. People do." Partly true. It is a Second Amendment right to bear arms. Partly true again. But freedom of speech is regulated so as not to allow yelling "Fire!" in a crowded theater, and freedom of religion does not allow human sacrifice. Just so, the right to bear arms is not unrestricted.

Simple regulations could include childproof locks on guns, registration of all handguns—which are involved in 70 percent of all homicides, suicides and accidental shootings—and the licensing of gun owners.

Child-proof medicine bottles: The NRA also says we don't need any more laws; we only need to enforce the ones we have. Enforcement is a good thing. Let's say, however, that we had thousands of laws regulating cars and traffic. But if driving on one side of

Youth most affected by gun violence

Here are some disturbing facts: Nearly 12 Americans under the age of 19 are killed each day by gun violence. Gun homicide is the fourth leading cause of death for young people ages 10 to 14 and, according to the National Center for Health Sciences, the second leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24. And the *New England Journal of Medicine* reports that people living in households where guns are kept have a three times higher risk of homicide and a five times higher risk of suicide than those in homes without guns.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were a total of 32,436 people killed by guns in the U.S. in 1997. Of these:

- 17,566 were suicides;
- 13,522 were homicides;
- 981 were accidental shootings;
- 367 were shooting deaths of undetermined intent.

In 1997, more than 4,200 youth up to age 19 were killed by guns . Of these:

- 2,580 were murdered by gunfire.
- 1,262 committed suicide using a gun —more than three people every day.
- 306 died from an accidental shooting.
- 630 young people killed by guns were under the age of 15.
- 191 young people killed by guns were under the age of 10.
- 84 young people were under the age of 5.—*Anne Myer Byler*

American children under 15 are 12 times more likely to die from gunfire than children in 25 other industrialized countries combined.

the road, registering cars and licensing drivers were not among them, we would definitely need more laws. Such is the case with guns in our land. We child-proof medicine bottles but not guns.

As Swiss Anabaptist leader Conrad Grebel said in 1524: "The gospel and its adherents are not to be protected by the sword, nor are they thus to protect themselves. Neither do they use worldly sword or war, since all killing has ceased with them."

But what role do believers take in a society with many nonpacifists, believers as well as nonbelievers? We say, "Actually, guns do kill people." And we work to pass laws that will keep guns from children and those with a record of violence. This, too, is part of our witness to Jesus and a peacemaking example.

Anne Myer Byler lives Goshen, Ind., and attends Assembly Mennonite Church with her family.

Peckerwood

by Nick Lindsay

Lord-to-God wood
Pecker, hammer on my house. Cry
Out as you fly into the burnt
Blackness of noon. When we die we
Fly with you into dark heaven. When we cry
Out our song we
Together are linked into the spirit land,
Together in the dark other world. Lord-to-God wood
Pecker.

Nick Lindsay lives on Edisto Island, S.C.

MENNOS AT WORK

Susan Goering, Baltimore

Congregation: Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church

Occupation: civil rights attorney

Years in occupation: 20

Why I do what I do: I grew up with an understanding of what it was like to be different, not only as an individual but as an insular group. The group identity ran deep in Mennonites in central Kansas. We were opposed to war, committed to simple living, dedicated to serving the poor and committed to a life's occupation that was service-oriented. This idealized group identity affected my life choices regarding friends and education, vocation and avocations. I decided to be a lawyer at age 10, after hearing the speeches given at the 1963 March on Washington. It occurred to me even then that law was a key to the change that was so desperately needed. To my fellow Mennonites who oppose my work for the American Civil Liberties Union I like to point out that in 1917, the Civil Liberties Bureau, precursor to the ACLU, was formed to defend opponents of the First World War—some of them, no doubt, religious objectors—who were being deported for their vocal resistance. I also point to the ACLU's long history of protecting the rights of insular minorities like Mennonites. These include workers denied the right to speak and organize, citizens denied the right to vote because of their skin color, women denied the right to equal employment, physically disabled citizens denied access to public accommodations, students forced to say the Pledge of Allegiance, gay and lesbian citizens denied their right to privacy, public housing tenants who want a choice about where to live and minor parties denied equal access to the ballot.

The role of faith in what I do: I serve clients such as those mentioned above as an ACLU lawyer and as a Mennonite. They motivate me to go to work each day. And though life has been good to me and my people—even as members of an insular religious minority—that heritage allows me in some small way to identify with the situation of minorities whose rights are still threatened.

Trend to 'superconferences' holds ramifications for smaller conferences, entire denomination

Within the next three weeks, eight General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church area conferences will consider plans for regional integration—plans that could have as much effect on others as on themselves. Propelled by GC-MC transformation, these area conference realignments are producing what some are calling "superconferences"—bodies with large enough memberships and resources that they could overshadow little conferences and maybe even the denomination.

On June 23 in Freeman, S.D., delegates from Iowa-Nebraska and Northern District conferences are scheduled to vote on a proposal to join into one integrated area conference. If approved as expected, the new Central Plains Conference would include 8,000 members in some 60 congregations from western Montana to southeastern Iowa.

That same weekend in Goshen, Ind., delegates from Central District, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences will consider a plan to combine their conferences into one with 35,000 members and 255 congregations in eight states. Action is slated for next year. Called Great Lakes Conference, it would be as large as Mennonite Church Canada.

During South Central and Western District conference joint meetings in Tulsa, Okla., July 7-9, delegates will hear a proposal to integrate their two conferences plus Rocky Mountain into one body with nearly 17,000 members and 128 congregations in eight states.

The trend toward superconferences makes the smaller area conferences even smaller by comparison. North Central is the tiniest in the emerging Mennonite Church USA with 438 members in 14 congregations. Puerto Rico is the next smallest with 462 members in 10 congregations, and Gulf States has 550 in 13 congregations.

Such conferences have had to rely heavily on the denomination for activities such as church planting in their areas. Gulf Coast moderator Glenn Myers wonders if that assistance might decrease because of the superconferences. "If most of the rest of the larger Mennonite Church is in larger conferences ... I see the area conferences becoming stronger and the [denomination's] central or Executive Board not exercising as much power or authority," he says.

Concern for future work was one impetus for the Rocky Mountain-South Central-Western District merger, says Alice Price, chair of the committee bringing the proposal. The committee recognized the emergence of superconferences. At the same time, she says, the committee unsuccessfully asked denominational leaders for counsel on what services and programs should be at the area conference level.

"Not having answers to those questions and seeing that trend [toward superconferences] probably tipped us toward a larger conference area," Price says.

While denominational transformation plans do not call for area conferences to realign, Mennonite Church USA executive secretary George Stoltzfus admits forces in the church will probably encourage new relationships. Those may be formal unions, such as Central Plains or Great Lakes conferences, or partnerships among conferences. For example, he says, one conference may have an evangelist who could be made available to others.

This requires the denomination to be the "nervous system," Stoltzfus says, compiling an inventory of services and talents in certain conferences, then linking them with other conferences needing such resources.

"I think the potential for this to become a much more intentionally networked organization ... is there in a way that was never possible to conceive before," Stoltzfus says.

He and others note that there will still be a need for denominational ministries such as curriculum and overseas missions. "There continues to be a role for a center ... with the wherewithal to coordinate the parts," says Ron Flaming, Commission on Overseas Mission executive secretary and leader of the team formulating mission structures for the new church.

Regardless of the structural outcomes, some smaller conferences wonder if their larger counterparts will wield more denominational influence because of their size. "[North Central's] only concern would be that a very large conference would receive more of a hearing," says moderator Fred Kanagy.

But in the end, he says, the definition of a superconference should not be based on size of membership. "God's grace is what makes us super," Kanagy says, "not critical mass."—*Rich Preheim*

Greatest to least: area conference memberships

Lancaster: 19,005 members / 220 congregations
Western District: 12,281 / 76
Indiana-Michigan: 12,149 / 100
Ohio: 11,101 / 79
Virginia: 8,899 / 76
Central District: 8,595 / 68
Franconia: 7,088 / 52
Atlantic Coast: 6,043 / 52
Illinois: 5,098 / 47
Eastern District: 4,615 / 27
South Central: 4,442 / 52
Northern District: 4,221 / 33
Iowa-Nebraska: 4,123 / 34
Allegheny: 3,685 / 36
Pacific Southwest: 2,913 / 56
Pacific Northwest: 2,828 / 32
Southeast: 2,690 / 30
Franklin: 1,565 / 18
Rocky Mountain: 1,516 / 20
New York: 1,272 / 20
Gulf States: 550 / 13
Puerto Rico: 462 / 10
North Central: 438 / 14
—Mennonite Directory 2000

After nearly a century, fate of first GC missionaries surfaces through Canadian immigrant grandson

Susanna and John F. Kroeker

Liese and Albert Friesen

REINLAND, Man.—John F. and Susanna Kroeker and P.A. and Elizabeth Penner, the first General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) overseas missionaries, arrived in India in late 1900. For health reasons, the Kroekers returned to John's native Russia in early 1909—and disappeared into history.

For nearly 92 years, their fate remained a mystery. Until now.

Earlier this year, longtime Commission on Overseas Mission worker Tina Block Ediger was invited to southern Manitoba for a series of speaking engagements about COM's centennial. During a phone conversation with Marlene Ens, her contact at Blumenort Mennonite Church in Rosetown, Man., Ediger made an amazing discovery.

Ens told Ediger that Blumenort was going to celebrate the centennial with the grandchild of the first GC mission workers.

"I was puzzled," Ediger says. "The Penner family came from Mountain Lake, Minn., not southern Manitoba. I asked [Ens] more about it. 'Oh, no, I mean the grandchild of John and Susanna Kroeker,' Marlene said. Well, all my wires went off at that."

The Kroekers' grandson Albert Friesen and his wife, Liese, moved to the Reinland, Man., area from Germany in 1997. Ediger visited with them during her Manitoba speaking tour and learned the fate of Albert's grandparents.

John Kroeker suffered from eczema and eventually could not tolerate the Indian climate, Ediger says. The family returned to Russia in 1909, eventually locating in Pavlodar, in what is now Kazakhstan.

After the Communist Revolution, the family made its way to Amur, northeast of China and where a number of Mennonites had moved to try and escape. In 1929, the Kroekers tried to flee Russia by crossing into Harbin, China (see sidebar, right). But they were betrayed by other Mennonites and sent to Siberia, Ediger says. John was sent to prison, and Susanna and their children went to work on a collective farm.

"A Mr. Loewen, who had been released from the same prison where John was held, brought a letter to Susanna from John that [Loewen] had smuggled out," Ediger says. "It had two dates, May 25 and June 29, 1932."

The letter was the last record of John F. Kroeker (see box, right). He died in prison, although it is not known exactly where or when. Susanna died of starvation, probably in 1941, as did the oldest of the Kroekers' eight children, who had been born in India.

Three daughters—Albert's mother, Lilli, and her sisters Maria and Anna—survived the exile. Lilli and Anna married two Friesen brothers. In 1979, Lilli immigrated to Germany with Albert, Liese and their three children. She died in 1987. After having contacts with Mennonite tourists in Gemany, Albert, Liese and their two daughters moved to Canada 10 years later. Their son still lives in Germany.

Also still in Germany is Albert's aunt Anna, now almost 90. Ediger is now in Germany, sent by COM to visit Anna, who lives in the town of Pforzheim. Ediger is joined by Helen Kornelson, a former GC missionary to India who is now retired in Watrous, Sask., and translating Susanna's India diary. Ediger also hopes to spend time with another newly discovered Kroeker granddaughter, now living in Ulm, who was present at the time of Susanna's death.

Soon after her visit with Albert and Liese, Ediger talked to Anil Bagh, a young Indian pastor who is doing church planting in Reno, Nev. "He is the grandson of the first convert from GC mission activity in the Saraipali area in India, and he was so excited to hear about this discovery," Ediger says. "He said to me, 'Tell the Friesens that their grandparents began a good work.' " *—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Reunion to recall Chinese escape

During the early cold, dark days of communism, many Mennonites in Russia sought escape by crossing the border into China and then to North America.

Not all made it. But 235 did, making it to California 70 years ago. On June 23-25, survivors, spouses and descendants—called Harbiners because they escaped through Harbin, China—will gather for a reunion at Three Rivers, Calif.

"It's a chance to count our blessings," says Marie Wiens of Hillsboro, Kan., who was 8 when her family fled to China in December 1929. "It's an opportunity to help the younger generation to know what it feels like to be homeless and penniless."
—Mennonite Weekly Review

Excerpts from John F. Kroeker's last letter

- Whether we will see each other again in this life is a big question but perhaps can be answered with a "no" rather than a "yes" humanly speaking. I feel like a wreck that can't withstand the storms of life.

- How I remember our wedding day 32 years ago. Who would have ever thought what would happen to us. God's ways are wonderful and incomprehensible, and yet He will lead us in a marvelous way. Should we not see each other here, we want to go forward hand in hand with love to meet our children who have already passed away and who wait our coming.

- Now I am again in the hospital. … I must look horrible since a Mr. Loewen asked me about confession and justice. "Justice is my dress of honor." That is my testimony, my dearly beloved wife and companion in my life. Gladly I would see you one more time, talk with you and die in your midst. Yet whatsoever God wills.

One year after Chicago MVS house break-in, mediation brings 'sense of peace and closure'

KNOB NOSTER, Mo.—Nearly a year after their unit house was the target of a break-in, members of the Pilsen Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) unit in inner-city Chicago got a chance to practice church teachings about restorative justice.

The crime occurred while unit members were in Missouri last June for the MVS annual retreat. In August, four boys ages 14 to 16 who lived in or had connections to the neighborhood were caught in another robbery. Police found some of the MVS unit members' belongings in the boys' possession. The unit had wanted mediation from the outset. That request was finally granted this spring, and unit members and three of the boys met May 8, more than five months after the intruders were sentenced.

"This was a first for the juvenile justice system in Chicago," says Darla Knepp, the only current MVS worker who had been part of the unit house at the time of the break-in. "There are mediation centers in the metro area, but there is no [victim-offender reconciliation program] operating in the court system."

Knepp and Rita Oswald, another unit member at the time of the break-in, spent three hours with three of the boys, a mother and one of the boys' therapists. The mediator came from the Center for Conflict Resolution, a nonprofit organization in Chicago.

"I didn't want [the boys] to think of mediation as punishment but rather as a time to communicate with each other and discuss ways to make things better in the future," Knepp says.

She says the meeting went well. "There must have been a lot of prayers being said because I left with a sense of peace and closure," Knepp says.

One thing the MVS workers wanted was to know why they were targeted. "They said it was just because they noticed we were gone," Knepp says. "We felt better knowing it had not been personal against us."

The mediation session also gave the MVSers a chance to explain why they are in Pilsen, the only whites in a Hispanic neighborhood.

"I told them, 'We work for the church,' " Knepp says. "They got very quiet. I think it really changed their perspective. They wanted to know about Mennonites and why we would work and not get paid.

"They now have a better understanding of our purpose for living in their neighborhood. And they shared some suggestions for how we can learn to know our neighbors better, like going to block parties and hanging out outside and visiting with people more."

At the close of the mediation, the boys signed a restitution agreement. Although the Pilsen unit house and its contents were insured, the unit members had to pay the deductible out of their own pockets.

"We decided we didn't want the money to go to us or the house but that we wanted them to choose an organization and a specific use for them to give it to. Two of them chose a church and one a shelter."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM news services*

Winnipeg unit second in two years to be robbed during annual retreat

KNOB NOSTER, Mo.—In what unhappily seems to be becoming a tradition, for the second year in a row a Mennonite Voluntary Service unit house was robbed during the annual MVS retreat.

Members of the Winnipeg MVS unit learned soon after arriving at the MVS retreat, held May 29-June 2 at Knob Noster State Park, that there had been a break-in at their unit house, which is owned by a member of Bethel Mennonite Church of Winnipeg, the unit's supporting congregation.

During last year's MVS retreat, the Pilsen MVS unit in Chicago was also robbed and vandalized.

The Winnipeg unit members left for Missouri on Saturday, May 27. A former unit member who had agreed to watch the house discovered evidence of the break-in the next morning. The thieves had broken down a locked, seldom-used side door and took two personal radio/compact disc players and a VCR. Milk, eggs and salad dressing from the refrigerator were also dumped on the kitchen floor. But the intruders did not touch bikes, a computer and $300 in petty cash stored in a drawer.

Unit member Dawn Myers said that people in a nearby house are suspected in the crime, although Winnipeg police have provided little help. After the break-in was discovered and reported, Ryan Warkentin, chair of the Winnipeg MVS support committee, waited at the house for four hours for police, who never arrrived. Two other committee members also waited in vain later in the day.

The house is on Langside Street, part of the city known for its high crime rate. MVS associate director Brad Reimer said that soon after the break-in, a support committee member had gone to a home in Tuxedo, an upper-middle class Winnipeg neighborhood. There the committee member was told that his hosts had called police over a similar incident the week before, "and they arrived in 10 minutes," Reimer says.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM news services*

Ethiopian church fighting famine, war, AIDS

WINNIPEG—The Meserete Kristos Church (MKC), the Mennonite church in Ethiopia, is marshalling responses against a trio of threats to life in the country: famine, war and AIDS.

In a letter to the Mennonite Church Canada General Board, Ethiopian Bedru Hussein, vice president of Mennonite World Conference, outlined thr MKC's efforts. The church's relief and development board, with Mennonite Central Committee assistance, is providing food to famine-stricken locations in the east and the north. In response to Ethiopia's war with Eritrea, the MKC and other Ethiopian churches are working with churches in Eritrea to pursue mediation. The AIDS epidemic has prompted MKC to send out doctors and other experts to give AIDS-awareness workshops.

Hussein's letter came in response to a letter from the Mennonite Church Canada General Board, expressing its support of the church in Ethiopia. "Your thoughtful concern and love, which are expressed in kindness and prayer support, are big statements for MKC and the entire Mennonite World Conference," Hussein wrote.—*MWC News Service*

80 percent of recent AMBS alumni in church work

ELKHART, Ind.—More than half of the graduates from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart in the past three years are now in the pastorate, according to a recent study.

Overall, 80 percent of the school's 108 graduates from 1997 to 1999 are in church-related occupations. Fifty-seven are serving as pastors, while six are pastoral counselors and spiritual directors. Twenty-seven graduates are serving in other church-related positions, such as with mission and service agencies or teaching at Mennonite schools. Another eight graduates are in post-graduate studies.

The remaining 10 graduates from these years are in transition or in nonministry jobs.

EMU provost-elect withdraws due to health

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Rick Maclin has withdrawn as provost-elect of Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) because of medical reasons. He had been scheduled to start his new position on July 1.

Maclin says the decision was based on a recently diagnosed vision problem that "could seriously affect my ability to perform the expected duties of provost at a satisfactory level."

In a letter to Joseph L. Lapp, president of the Harrisonburg, Va., school, Maclin wrote: "Since excellence has always been a standard for me, I don't want to put either you or myself in a position that would hinder the progress of the university."

Maclin will continue in his current role as associate academic dean at Fontbonne College in St. Louis. EMU will reconvene the search committee to plan next steps.

Goshen breaks ground for music building

GOSHEN, Ind.—The Goshen College community broke ground June 2 for a new music building. Construction on the $22 million project is expected to start later this month and be completed by late 2001. The building will include a 1,000-seat performance hall, a 300-seat recital hall, practice rooms, studios and classrooms.

by the way ...

The most days put into one Mennonite Disaster Service project were 42,000 by 6,600 volunteers from August 1992 until March 1994 after Hurricane Andrew hit Florida and Louisiana.—*The Hammer Rings Hope* by Lowell Detweiler

MCC photo by Pearl Sensenig

Detecting the problem

Bouavanh Maneevong uses a metal detector donated by Mennonite Central Committee to search for cluster bombs scattered throughout the countryside of Laos. During wars in Indochina from 1964 to 1973, the United States dropped millions of cluster bombs on Laos, many of which did not detonate and remain dangerously hidden. MCC started its Laos bomb-removal project in 1994. But by 1996, the project had outgrown MCC. Today an agency, sponsored by various governments and organizations, is responsible for clearing bombs in Laos. MCC is now exploring sponsoring bomb-removal projects in Kosovo.

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Births

Bailey, Madeline Faith, May 26, to Patricia (Wise) and Paul Bailey, Plymouth, Ind.

Baumgartner, Franklin Scott, May 23, to Laura (Urwin) and Mike Baumgartner, Indianapolis.

Detweiler, Joshua Luke, April 13, to Jody (Sensenig) and Marc Detweiler, Harleysville, Pa.

Diller, Hannah Joelle, May 1, to Jerold and Kay (Zehr) Diller, Cape Coral, Fla.

Engstrom, Bailey David, May 9, to Angie (Gerber) and David Engstrom, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Fajardo, Benjamin Eligio, May 6, to Eligio Fajardo and Robin (Arnett), Indianapolis.

Haarer, Alexa Jean, April 20, to Connie (Nunemaker) and Mark Haarer, Spencerville, Ind.

Hughes, Rebekah Joy, May 18, to David and Sherri (Roth) Hughes, Schwenksville, Pa.

Moon, Danica Evelyn, May 16, to Daniel and Pamela (Jones) Moon, Lexington, Pa.

Nord, Andrew Timothy, May 15, to Angie (Wenger) and Chris Nord, Albany, Ore.

Sherwood, Bailey Anne, April 20, to Elizabeth Meeker and Steve Sherwood, Iowa City, Iowa.

Wagler, Katelyn Janelle, May 28, to Brian and Heidi (Ramseyer) Wagler, Tavistock, Ont.

Marriages

Bell/Headings: Christine Bell, Huntsville, Pa., and Roger Headings, West Liberty, Ohio, May 27.

Burd/Hetrick: Susan Burd, Macungie, Pa., and Brian Hetrick, Macungie, May 20 at Christ Lutheran Church, Dryville, Pa.

Ginder/Snavely: Erica Ginder, Manheim, Pa., and Jason L. Snavely, Manheim, May 20 at Ruhls United Methodist Church, Manheim.

Hofer/Timmerman: Nicolle Hofer, Freeman, S.D., and Larry Timmerman, Yankton, S.D., May 27 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Holsopple/Moyer: Richard Holsopple, Hollsopple, Pa., and Shelby Moyer, Friedens, Pa., May 20 at Jenners Township, Pa.

Ingersoll/Nisly: Adam Ingersoll, Marina Del Rey, Calif., and Brigette Nisly, Kalona, Iowa, May 28 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Kabua/Reames: Wutko Kabua, West Liberty, Ohio, and David Reames, Ohio, May 20 at South Union Church, West Liberty.

Deaths

Burkholder, Viola Bawel, 77, Iowa City, Iowa, died of cancer on May 4. Spouse: Harold Burkholder (deceased). Parents: John and Kate Bawel (deceased). Survivors: child Lonnee; three grandchildren. Funeral: May 6 at First Mennonite Church, Iowa City.

Glanzer, Edna Schrag, 93, Freeman, S.D., died May 10. Spouse: Joseph Glanzer (deceased). Parents: John and Katie Miller Schrag (deceased). Survivors: child Orinne Stoner; four grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Memorial service: May 13 at Salem-Zion Mennonite Church, Freeman.

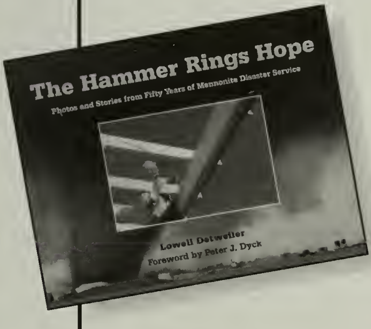
Hershberger, Russell, 86, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died of heart problems May 22. Spouse: Esther Immel Hershberger. Parents: George and Millie Garber Hershberger (deceased). Funeral: May 26 at Sugarcreek.

Hostetter, J. Virgil, 88, Greenwood, Del., died April 24. Spouse: Lois Hostetter. Other survivors: children Marjorie Swartzentruber, John, Anna Glick, Robert; 13 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: April 29 at Greenwood Mennonite Church.

Miller, Alice, 94, Louisville, Ohio, died of congestive heart failure on May 23. Parents: Samuel and Mary Goldsmith Miller (deceased). Funeral: May 25 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Miller, Hazel Stauffer, 90, Millersville, Pa., died May 3. Spouse: Menno Miller (deceased). Parents: Isaiah and Adeline Burkholder Stauffer (deceased). Survivors: children Lavon Miller, Lois Fahnestock, Linda L. Black; five grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 6 at Millersville Mennonite Church.

Wedel, Orval Torry, 78, Mesa, Ariz., died May 12. Spouse: Ruth Wedel. Other survivors: children Janice Herbert, Kathryn Lay, Craig; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: May 15 at Koinonia Mennonite Church, Chandler, Ariz.


The Hammer Rings Hope
Photos and Stories from Fifty Years of Mennonite Disaster Service
Lowell Detweiler
Foreword by Peter J. Dyck

Outbursts of Love and Good Deeds

Hesston, Kansas, 1990. Disaster strikes. A storm-damaged community lies in ruins. An eerie silence prevails. A few former residents wander aimlessly. A van with an unusual emblem on its side picks its way through the tangled streets; Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) volunteers are on the scene.

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classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

Lake Center Christian School (K-8) in Hartville, Ohio, is accepting applications for an ***elementary/middle school music teacher***. A part-time or full-time position is available. Fax resumes to Matt McMullen, Principal, 330-877-2040; or call 330-877-2049.

Philadelphia Mennonite High School is in need of teachers of ***English, social studies, science*** and ***PE***. Multicultural, urban experience desired. Please apply to Marlene Brubaker, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130; email <PhillyMenn@aol.com>.

Prince of Peace Mennonite Church (Anchorage, Alaska), a small, family-oriented church founded on Anabaptist teachings, seeks part-time ***pastoral leadership*** July 2000. Inquiries to Rosetta Landis, 907-337-5813 or email <krjlandis@netscape.net>. Information available upon request.

Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries is taking applications for the ***director of ministerial leadership services*** position, a half-time assignment managing the pastor-calling system (resumes and references for pastor candidates) and serving conference ministers in the Mennonite Church USA. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

Send resume and references by July 1 to Everett Thomas, MBCM, P.O. Box 1245, Elkhart, IN 46515-1245; email <vrtt@juno.com>.

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New Danville Mennonite School, Lancaster, Pa., seeks teacher applications for the following positions: ***full-time K-8 PE, and elementary; part-time home ec. and Spanish***. Contact Judi Mollenkof, NDMS, 393 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-872-2506; fax 717-872-5201.

Ephrata Mennonite School is seeking teachers: ***social studies/PE*** starting August 2000; ***grade 5*** starting August 2000; ***grade 4*** starting January 2001. An accredited school, EMS has 200 students K-9.

Write to David L. Sauder, Principal, 598 Stevens Road, Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-738-4266 or 717-859-1344.

The Branch, the Bird and the Song: A Gathering for John and Roma Ruth will be held in Harleysville and Lansdale, Pa., on ***Oct. 27-29, 2000.*** Friends and family are organizing this event scheduled midway between John and Roma's 70th birthdays and within several months of their 50th wedding anniversary to celebrate the special ministry of these two people, both individually and together. The keynote event of the weekend will be a performance of the Christopher Dock Cantata, under the direction of Alice Parker. All are welcome. Additional details to be announced this summer. For information contact Salford Mennonite Church, 215-256-0778.

Mid-sized family-owned business based in northeastern Ohio Mennonite community seeks a ***president***. Responsibilities include the overall leadership and direction of restaurants, hotel, gift shops and a food processing facility. Ideal candidate will have good written and oral communication skills, be a proven leader of a successful organization, understand and respect Amish-Mennonite culture, possess knowledge of financial analysis and management, have an MBA and/or experience as a general manager or president of a medium-to-large corporation. Salary is competitive, based on prior experience, and a generous benefit package includes 401K and stock options.

Send resume, cover letter and references to Len Geiser, Len Geiser & Associates, 610 Revere Drive, Goshen, IN 46526; email <lenrg@goshen.edu>.

The Welcome Home Community, a project of the Mennonite Society for the Aid of Children and Families, is hiring full-time salaried ***social workers***. An exciting and unique community-based family support program in the beautiful city of Edmonton, Alta., we offer a variety of programs to young families at risk of child welfare involvement. Staff mentoring, parenting classes, anger management, family nights, regular outings and a variety of children's programs provide opportunities for socialization, skill development and support. Duties include mentoring up to five families as well as planning and facilitating programs. Qualifications include a BSW and social work experience with at-risk families. Applicants should be able to work with a team of staff and from an Anabaptist faith perspective, and must be willing to live in the neighborhood of the center. Salary is commensurate with education and experience. Positions available to start in August or September.

Apply by June 30, 2000, to Vic Thiessen, Welcome Home Community, 11009 127 St., Edmonton, AB T5M 0T3; 780-413-4686; fax 780-413-4563; email <whc@welcomehome.ab.ca>; web <www.welcomehome.ab.ca>.

Bluffton College seeks a full-time ***director of libraries*** beginning January 2001. Responsibilities include leadership and coordination of planning, budgeting, managing the collections and staffing of Musselman Library, including the Mennonite Historical Library, the Bluffton College Archives and other collections on campus. Direct the library's integration of technology through its participation in the OPAL and OhioLINK consortia. Represent library matters to administration, serve as liaison with library publics and interact effectively with faculty and others in promoting the mission of the library. Graduate degree from an ALA-accredited program required; Ph.D. preferred. Administrative and supervisory experience in an academic setting expected. Review of applications will begin Aug. 1, 2000, and continue until an appointment is made. For more information see <www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/employment.htm>. Review of applications will begin Aug. 1, 2000, and continue until the position is filled.

Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Dr. Robert Peiffer, Associate Dean, Bluffton College, 280 West College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

by Gordon Houser

Christians tend not to talk much about the human body. Historically, the church has tended to treat the body negatively. Often the message has been to either punish it or ignore it so that the spirit might flourish.

We live in a culture obsessed with the body. Diet and exercise programs are big business, and the media abound in references to people's concern for their bodies.

An article in *Time* ("Never Too Buff," April 24) begins with a pop quiz: "Who are more likely to be dissatisfied with the appearance of their chests, men or women? Who is more likely to be concerned about acne, your teenage son or his sister? And who is more likely to binge eat, your nephew or your niece?"

Except for the last question, the answers are men and boys. And even there the margin of difference will surprise you. "About 40 percent of Americans who go on compulsive eating sprees are men," the article goes on. "Thirty-eight percent of men want bigger pecs, while only 34 percent of women want bigger breasts. And more boys have fretted about zits than girls, going all the way back to a 1972 study."

According to a new book, *The Adonis Complex* by Harrison Pope, Katharine Phillips and Roberto Olivardia (Free Press, 2000, $25), over the past few decades, American men have become obsessed with their bodies.

Perhaps you know some men who should be more concerned with their bodies. However, we're not talking about health but appearance. The *Time* article says, "Nearly half of men don't like their overall appearance, in contrast to just 1 in 6 in 1972." One study found that "46 percent of men of normal weight think about their appearance 'all the time' or 'frequently.' "

This leads to big money. "Last year American men forked over $2 billion for gym memberships—and another $2 billion for home exercise equipment," the article says. And this doesn't include the money being spent for illegal anabolic steroids, the common name for synthetic testosterone.

This summer, an easy-to-apply testosterone ointment, AndroGel, is to become generally available for the first time by prescription. This should only feed this obsession.

Another factor feeding the problem is advertising. The article says, "Ripped male bodies are used today to advertise everything that shapely female bodies advertise: not just fitness products but also dessert liqueurs, microwave ovens and luxury hotels." The authors of *The Adonis Complex* call for men and boys to rebel against these images and see them for what they are: a goal unattainable without drug use.

These issues have been raised and explored by women for years. One such book is *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty Are Used Against Women* by Naomi Wolf (Doubleday, 1992, $13.95). Now, says Katharine Phillips, "It may be harder for men than women to talk about these problems because it's not considered masculine to worry about such things."

Seeking healthier bodies is not the issue. As our June 6 editorial pointed out, the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. But our increasing failure to accept ourselves and others is not healthy. Neither is the increasing obsession with our appearance.

We need to help each other fight the wider culture that foists images of the perfect body (male or female) on us and tempts us to pursue an impossible ideal. The messages such images present are lies. But we cannot live in the truth that God loves us as we are unless we are free to talk with one another about our struggles with feeling inadequate. Women have done a better job of this than men, but all of us need to address this growing problem. When was the last time you heard a sermon on how we view our bodies?

TV

Two Jesus films appeared on network TV in May. CBS aired a two-part, four-hour miniseries called *Jesus*. Promoted as showing "Jesus as a real guy," the film both succeeded and overdid it. Actor Jeremy Sisko's California surfer looks (at least his hair doesn't look freshly shampooed) and numerous scenes of Jesus laughing or showing anger gave me pause. The intent was good, just overdone. The scenes of Jesus being tempted by Satan, who appears as a business tycoon and as an attractive woman, are creative and help us feel Jesus' dilemma. Despite some narrative flaws, the political background is truer than most Jesus films, and this one includes miracles and the resurrection.

ABC showed a claymation film called *The Miracle Maker*. I liked this even more. The historical accuracy impressed me, and the characters who are Jewish look Jewish. This is one of the first Jesus films to portray Mary Magdalene as demon-possessed instead of as a prostitute (a cliché). Both films help us reflect on the Jesus story and move us, I hope, back to the Gospels.

films

Two recent films use religious content with varying success. *Keeping the Faith* (PG-13) is a romantic comedy about a priest and rabbi who fall for their childhood friend, now grown up. While it takes religion more seriously than most films, it insists that faith is merely a feeling with little intellectual or ethical content.

The Third Miracle (PG-13), on the other hand, presents a more serious portrayal of religion. A priest (Ed Harris) is sent to test the claims for sainthood for a deceased woman. In the course of his investigation, the priest struggles with his own faith. Despite some clichéd moments, the film presents religion, in this case Catholicism, as flawed and genuine, as messy and mysterious. The title refers to the third miracle needed to solidify a candidate's sainthood.

videos

Music from the Heart (PG) tells the true story of a violin teacher (Meryl Streep) in the South Bronx who helps children excel at their music. Well-acted and inspiring.

Bringing Out the Dead (R) shows the sad, crazy underbelly of New York through the eyes of a burned-out emergency medical technician (Nicholas Cage). Director Martin Scorsese fills the film with Christian images and references (there's even a virgin birth). It's not to everyone's tastes, though.

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J. Lorne Peachey

Ten two-letter words for getting rid of 'them'

Is it just me, or are we experiencing an epidemic of "they" and "them" talk these days? What I'm hearing are questions like these: What are they doing to our church? Why are they taking so long with integration? When will they make up their minds about membership? What are they up to, anyway?

The church does not have a corner on this kind of talk. Newspaper columns, talk shows and email chat rooms are full of it: What are they doing to our country? When will they listen to the little people? Who do they think they are, anyway? A T-shirt I saw on a middle-aged man in the local grocery store sums up this us-them dichotomy well for me: "They run the railroads, we run the trains."

How our language betrays us. When things are going our way, when we're happy with life, our talk is about us and what we've done. We identify with a cause we like or an action we approve. But when things are not going well, when we disagree with some course or action, then it is they and what they are doing that become subjects of our conversations. No longer do we take responsibility for what is happening. In short, what we like is ours, what we don't belongs to them.

So for me it was a breath of fresh air to get a letter from Walt Braun, Tofield, Alta., with a different message. After updating his address since retiring from 36 years as a pastor, Walt ended his letter with "10 two-letter words" for improving relationships and getting things done: "If it is to be, it is up to me."

What an antidote for "them" talk. It puts the responsibility for our world, our church, our lives precisely where it should be: with me, with us. The church is not run by them, it is controlled by us. Our country is not theirs, it is ours.

If the world needs more justice, it will not come by waiting for them to act. If there is to be peace, that peace begins with me, not them. If there is to be more equity, more love, more gentleness, more decency, those will not come by being critical of them. These things will come as I take responsibility to be more equitable in my dealings, to treat others with charity and respect and to be more decent in what I read, watch and think about.

The same is true for the church. A transformed Mennonite Church will not come as I wait for them to decide how it should be or when it should happen. It will come as I pray for those who have been asked to lead transformation, give feedback when I am asked for my opinions and pass on new ideas as they come to me. But, most of all, it will come as I trust the process, believing that it is led by the Spirit and that it will result in a church truly relevant to a new century.

If it is to be, it is up to me. Suppose those 10 two-letter words were our first thought when we encounter something we don't like, something we believe should be changed or some uncertainty that has us confused. What might happen if we put as much energy into assuming responsibility for our small part of an action or a process as we do in criticizing what they are doing to us and our world?

Taking the responsibility for our part in making changes or correcting situations is the first and biggest step toward getting rid of "them."—*jlp*

If it is to be,
it is up to me.

Why or why not?

If us-them language betrays how we really feel about a situation, so do the questions we ask when confronted by the new or the different. "Why?" is the first question that comes from some of us, "why not?" from others.

Which question we ask is determined quite often by how much we have at stake in what's new or different. If we're concerned about survival or our image, or if new ideas or different situations threaten us, we ask, "Why?" If, however, we're convinced of the appropriateness or the benefit of what's new, if we believe it will bring new life and growth, then our question will likely be, "Why not?"

"Why not?" should be the question of the church. When Jesus began this gathering of believers, he ensured its survival with these words: "I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it" (Matthew 16:18 NLT).

With our survival assured, newness should not be a threat to the church. Since new life and growth are what it means to be a disciple, we Christians have the luxury of making our first question, "Why not?"—*jlp*

the Mennonite

June 27, 2000

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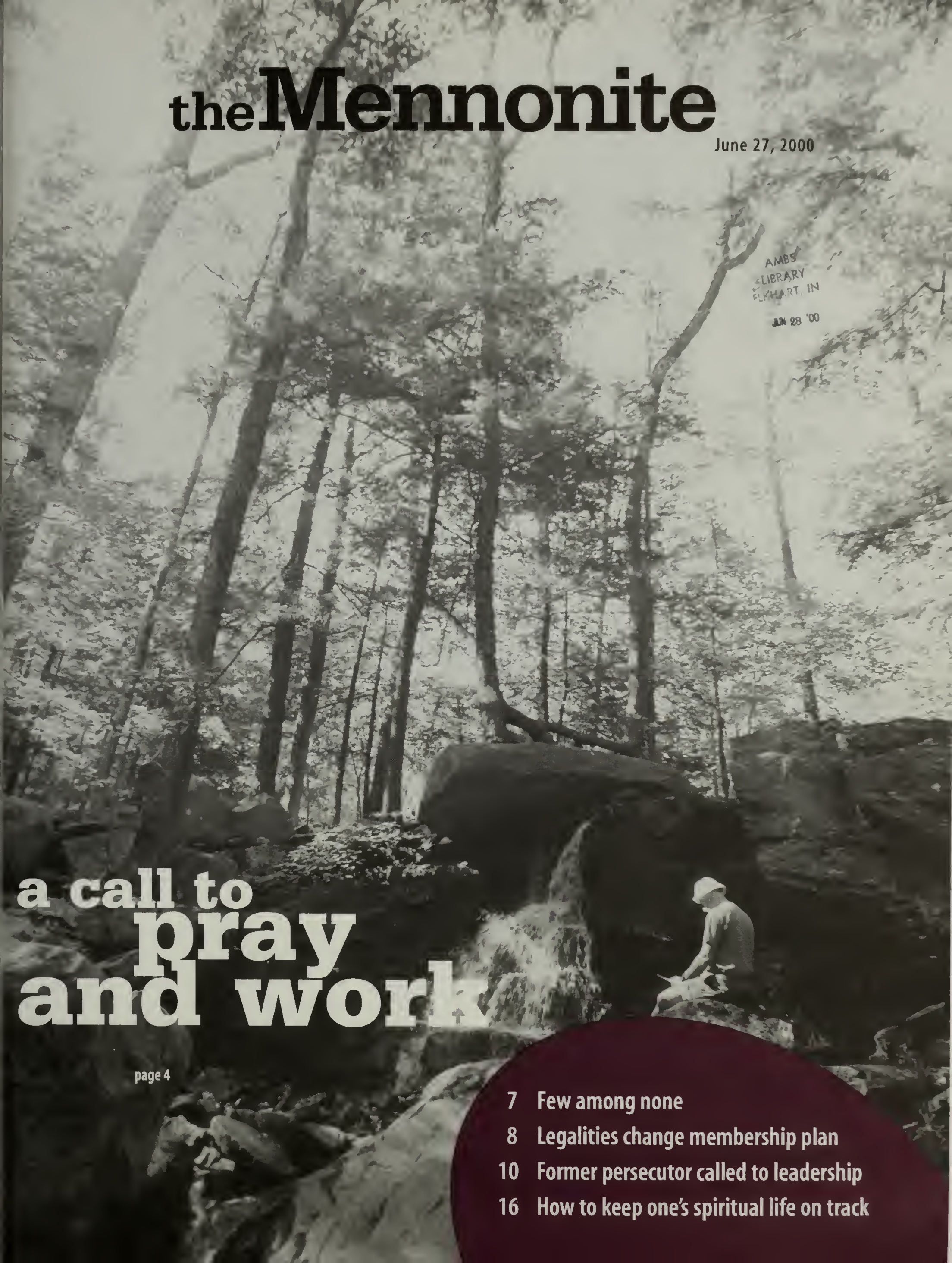

a call to pray and work

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8 Legalities change membership plan
10 Former persecutor called to leadership
16 How to keep one's spiritual life on track

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

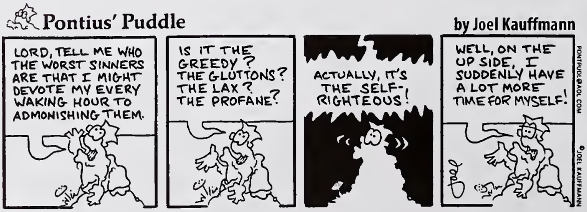
Guidelines dialogue

I am committed to congregational polity as expressed in the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition. It is out of this context that I was alarmed by the possible implications of the membership proposal that received "assent from the majority of the Constituency Leaders Council" ("Membership Plan: 'Everybody In' Is Out," June 6.) Two points in particular caught my attention: (1) the possible shift in how the confession of faith will be used and understood as it is applied to determining membership in Mennonite Church USA, and (2) this statement: "The [membership] document also states that pastors 'are expected to uphold the wider church's discernment as the teaching points of the church' or risk disciplinary action."

In my mind, there is no necessary problem in gathering a consensus around the confession of faith. But if it is used to arbitrate acceptable interpretation on issues of faith and life, then the character of the confession will change from being a descriptive to a prescriptive document. This move toward creedalism would seriously undermine the community's role and responsibility to continue to grapple with and apply the guidance of Scripture to our contemporary life.

That this proposal would also expect the pastor to bear the burden of upholding this standard or risk disciplinary action is chilling. I am alarmed by the implication that the pastor is being asked (by whose authority?) to enforce a standard in the congregation that originates from outside the congregation.

There is no mistaking the fact that the Mennonite church at this time in its history is being asked to grapple with a difficult issue. It won't be the last. But it is precisely in times like this that we dare not retreat into "one size fits all" creedal formulations. We must continue to struggle as a faith community, studying and listening, doing the hard work together. Don't make pastors the easy target. Otherwise, they won't be able to help you at all.—*Gary F. Daught, Tucson, Ariz.*


Pontius' Puddle
by Joel Kauffmann
LORD, TELL ME WHO THE WORST SINNERS ARE THAT I MIGHT DEVOTE MY EVERY WAKING HOUR TO ADMONISHING THEM.
IS IT THE GREEDY? THE GLUTTONS? THE LAX? THE PROFANE?
ACTUALLY, IT'S THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS!
WELL, ON THE UP SIDE, I SUDDENLY HAVE A LOT MORE TIME FOR MYSELF!
PONTIUSL@AOL.COM
©JOEL KAUFFMANN
Joel

If Mennonites weren't a club before, it looks like we may soon be. I am distressed to hear about the new proposal for church membership guidelines. As unable as we seem to be to agree on matters of unity and church polity, I fear that applying for membership in Mennonite Church USA will soon become a cumbersome and destructive process. Granted, the proposal refers to conferences joining the national conference, but how long will it take before individuals will have to perform rites of initiation to join a local congregation?

Putting aside the issue of what is sin, will someone please show me where Jesus required his disciples to apply for association with him? My Bible says Jesus asked a diverse combination of people, with differing and sometimes conflicting ideologies, to all follow him. And when these same people asked him about who was in and who was out, he told them to let God separate the wheat from the weeds in God's own time. They did not beg Jesus for the opportunity to follow him; they were called. The new membership proposal puts many who hear that call today in grave danger of being unable to answer it. The attempt to determine who is in and who is out seems to be an attempt to do a task that is exclusively God's.

I truly believe that our attempt to establish membership guidelines in order to maintain church purity is not of God and that it is doomed to failure. I'm afraid that unity or integration on one front is going to be at the cost of disintegration on another front. Let's not jump to chopping each other off the vine. We are too nearsighted to discern which branches will bear fruit. Perhaps we can have faith that the true Gardener will do his job with justice and righteousness.—*Lelyn Saner, Fairfax, Va.*

The proposed new membership guidelines state that current General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church conferences and congregations that "share … vision and commitments" may join Mennonite Church USA. What does this mean? Does it mean that each congregation must require every member to read the entire confession of faith and all denominational statements? Does it mean that in order to be accepted by a conference, congregations must expel every member who dissents to any one item? Despite what we say about focusing on mission and being a people of mission, are we in reality endeavoring to make homosexuality the litmus test for membership? Is that our perception of God's dream

theMennonite

Vol. 3, No. 24, June 27, 2000

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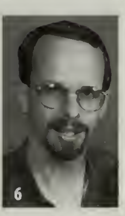
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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

for the church Christ gave his life to form? *—Ruth Conrad Liechty, Goshen, Ind.*

Thank you for the thoughtful coverage of the Constituency Leaders Council meeting in May. Please allow me to add some additional perspective on the question of guidelines for membership. As reported, the majority of CLC members seemed supportive about the new direction to opt in to membership in Mennonite Church USA. But we also face some legal and logistical questions this direction raises. These must be addressed more fully in the September CLC meeting. As an advisory body, the CLC gave only general approval to the proposed guidelines and made suggestions for further revisions by a subcommittee. The revisions made since the meeting reflect further legal counsel. The guidelines with the latest revisions are now are being sent to the CLC as well as convention delegates for their response. The development of these guidelines is crucial, since they provide the basis for the bylaws of the new church.*—Ervin Stutzman, chair, Constituency Leaders Council, Mount Joy, Pa.*

Editor's note: See story, page 8.

Body type

The editorial "Don't You Know That Your Body Is a Temple of the Holy Spirit?" (June 6), while presenting a good and valid point, misses the focus of Paul's teaching. We have a problem translating "you" plural from the Greek. 1 Corinthians 6:18 speaks about a man sinning against his own body. "Your" in verses 19 and 20 is plural while "body" is singular. "Temple" is likewise singular. This signifies to me that the "body" spoken of in verses 19 and 20 is the body of believers and not our individual bodies. *—Ben Kenagy, Albany, Ore.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

Prefer nothing whatever to Chris

How I became a Benedictine Mennonite

by Arthur Paul Boers

> I discovered that promising before others to stay faithful to my disciplines in itself encouraged me when I was tempted not to pray. And when I do pray, I am helped by knowing that I am supported and upheld by the prayers of brother monks (just as I pray for them).

As part of my spiritual discipline I regularly study a historic Christian document that is heavily inspired by the Sermon on the Mount. It teaches about prayer, worship, nonresistance, community, not swearing oaths, loving enemies, mutual aid, Matthew 18's Rule of Christ and the importance of faithful works. Perhaps it is no surprise that a Mennonite minister is committed to learning from such a spiritual classic. But this is no Anabaptist document (although I believe it inspired Anabaptists such as Michael Sattler).

The Rule of St. Benedict precedes Anabaptists by a millennium. It was written by Benedict, an abbot in the sixth century, as a guide to running monasteries he founded. It soon became the prevailing guide for most monasteries in the West, second in importance only to the Bible (which it quotes frequently). Many who are not monastics find that the underlying theology and counsel of this spiritual treasure—in between advice on diets, bedtimes, kitchen work—has much to teach all Christians.

I have been going to St. Gregory's Abbey, an Anglican Benedictine monastery, since 1981. (Not all monasteries are Roman Catholic.) As my connection there deepened, I sensed the call of God emerging.

I admit that at times, especially on peaceful retreats, I fantasize about joining a monastery. But God calls me to be a Mennonite minister, husband and father. When I remember that, then my regular rhythm of retreats helps me to be more faithful and focused in my commitments at home and in church.

Longing to deepen that rhythm, several years ago I entered a process of relating more intentionally with St. Gregory's. At first as a "confrater" (or brother) I made a simple promise to live out Benedictine values in daily life and to love of God, neighbor, prayer, humility, silence, creation and life in Christ. Yet I also wanted something more. For the next year and a half, as an "aspirant," I tested with the abbot the possibility of being an oblate.

"Oblate" literally means "sacrifice" or "offering" and here implies offering one's life to God. Monastic oblates live outside a monastery but have an intentional and committed relationship with a particular monastery. They are accountable there for how they live out their spiritual commitments. Oblates and monks support each other in living out their faith.

Practical spirituality: Intriguingly, while monasteries have increasing difficulty attracting new monks, the number of oblates is growing. Kathleen Norris (a Presbyterian) did more than anyone to celebrate what it means to be an oblate with her best-selling book *The Cloister Walk*. Oblates fulfill their particular duties as Christians wherever they are. The abbot was clear that my oblation would mean strengthening my commitment to my denomination and the church I serve and deepening my faithfulness to my wife and children. Being an oblate is not a distraction but further commitment to God's call on and in my life. To be an oblate means living by the Benedictine motto "ora et labora" (Latin for "pray and work"). This calls for a balanced life of practical spirituality that blends productive work and steadfast prayer and worship (both corporate and individual). Being Benedictine means honoring the following priorities:

- being actively and loyally involved with the church and encouraging Christian community;
- being committed to continual self-improvement and renewal as Christians (spiritually, intellectually and culturally through prayer, retreats and study);
- growing in ministry and service to others, especially by learning contentment, patience, generosity and hospitality;
- growing in virtues, with special attention to wisdom, prudence, justice, fortitude and moderation;
- practicing accountability and seeking guidance in one's Christian life;
- being peacemakers. A Benedictine watchword is "pax" or peace. Christians are called to live at peace with God, others and even enemies. Benedict saw nonresistance as a primary step of growth in the Christian's spiritual life. Joan Chittister, a nun, says that nonviolence is the center of the monastic life.

As part of my testing of whether I was called to be an oblate, I submitted my personal rule (or discipline) for spiritual life and reported regularly on how my commitment was going. I discovered that promising before others to stay faithful to my disciplines in itself encouraged me when I was tempted not to pray. And when I do pray, I am helped by knowing that I am supported and upheld by the prayers of brother monks (just as I pray for them). Nothing has ever been so helpful in my commitment to be prayerful; never have I been offered such support by other Christians.

Marilyn Nolt

My year and a half as an aspirant was spent exploring what it means to take the oblate vows, studying the Rule of St. Benedict and testing my own daily spiritual disciplines with the abbot to whom I am accountable. Then I became an Oblate Novice by making a temporary promise. This was a further time of testing and discernment by both the monastery and me. I received a monastic name, "Brother Barnabas."

After another year and a half, at a morning worship service in the monastery with my family present, I did my oblate profession. This is a lifelong commitment. Being an oblate deepened and renewed for me all the other important commitments I have made along the way: baptism, marriage, family, ordination.

For many years I explored different forms of intentional Christian community and small groups. In several attempts at community either I or the group did not endure. But now I am part of a community that is over 1,500 years old. It will last even if I do not.

I am not alone. I am in contact with other Mennonites who are Benedictine oblates. Yet some people are surprised, wondering whether being a Benedictine Mennonite is a contradiction. But Anabaptism has much in common with monasticism, whether or not it is a direct descendant of it. Many Anabaptist leaders received spiritual formation as monks (as Benedictines or Franciscans, for example).

Spiritual cousins: Anabaptists and monastics are at least spiritual cousins. In the lives and sayings of the Desert Fathers and Mothers and the Rule of St. Benedict we see their reliance on a similar "canon within the Canon" (or favorite Scripture passages) as Anabaptists, especially the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 18 and Acts' descriptions of common life and common treasury. Monasticism, like Anabaptism, is rooted in protest against compromise in the culture and the church. Furthermore, Anabaptists, like the original monastics (both Desert Fathers and Benedict), showed suspicion toward clergy. Monasticism was originally a movement of lay Christians, and clergy were not encouraged to apply.

Schleitheim, the first Anabaptist confession, reiterates many themes of the Rule of St. Benedict. (Hardly surprising, since one of its primary authors, Michael Sattler, was formerly a Benedictine official.) Anabaptists in the Reformation were accused of being "new monks." They encouraged all believers to live up to the Sermon on the Mount's high "standards of perfection" (previously considered the responsibility only of monastics).

As well as affirming my Anabaptism, through my oblation I made deeper connections with the wider church. Benedictinism is ecumenical. Augustine Morris, a monk, notes that Benedictines are in a good position for "fostering unity among Christians" as "their foundation and inspiration go back beyond the controversies which split Western Christendom in the 16th century and even well beyond the schism between East and West."

Benedict reminds us that God's "divine presence is everywhere." That is one reason for all his practical advice (with which both my Dutch heritage and my chosen Anabaptism resonate well). Norvene Vest, an oblate, notes that Benedict "truly believes that our sanctification is realized in our daily choices and habits." Benedict taught us, as did Anabaptists much later, to translate God's "holy teachings" into action.

God called me to find a spiritual home at St. Gregory's. In doing so, I promise to make work, worship and prayer central in my life. I promise to study and pray with the Bible everyday, to work in service to God and others and to commit myself to spiritual growth. All my Benedictine commitments are summarized in my desire, in Benedict's words, to "seek God." The monastery helps me in my commitments and is, in Benedict's words again, a "school of the Lord's service," a place that teaches me, inspires me and calls me to be a better Christian. I anticipate it will continue to encourage me to grow, as I remain accountable for the rest of my life to the monastery for how I live out my commitments.

Ever since I was a child, I believed that if Christianity is true then it must be the most important aspect of one's life. It has to change, affect and challenge you. I sought always to make Christian faith primary in my life. I have not always succeeded, but the compulsion will not go away. Thus I continually remind myself, in Benedict's words, to "prefer nothing whatever to Christ." My oblation as a Benedictine Mennonite compels me to be more faithful to this challenge.

Arthur Paul Boers is pastor at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Courtesy photo

I promise to study and pray with the Bible everyday, to work in service to God and others and to commit myself to spiritual growth.

—Arthur Paul Boers

From Amish simplicity to Syrian Orthodox worship

Mennonites and the Syrian Orthodox can learn from one another.

by Carol Thiessen

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

I like the idea that you do your best to bring heaven to earth when you worship.—*Eldon Wagler*

Eldon Wagler grew up in a Beachy Amish church in Kansas. Now he teaches at a Syrian Orthodox seminary in the Middle East. Talk about change.

From a church characterized by quiet, simple services, Eldon has embraced the sense-engaging, deeply liturgical worship style of the Syrian Orthodox. "I like the idea that you do your best to bring heaven to earth when you worship," says Eldon. He says Orthodox services call all five senses into worship with the use of incense, instruments and icons.

Eldon Wagler and Jane Emile-Wagler, his wife, have been Mennonite Central Committee country representatives in Syria since 1997. Eldon previously volunteered with MCC in Egypt, where he met Jane, the daughter of an Egyptian Coptic Orthodox priest.

His first forays into Orthodox territory occurred in Egypt. That interest deepened with his involvement as an English teacher at St. Ephrem's Seminary, north of Damascus, Syria.

The Syrian Orthodox church traces its roots back to a community founded by Peter at Antioch in the year 37. Church members still use ancient Syriac in their worship—a language akin to the Aramaic spoken by Jesus. Now widely dispersed, the church numbers about 160,000 members in Syria and about 1.5 million worldwide.

St. Ephrem's Seminary is one of only two Syrian Orthodox seminaries in the Middle East. It offers a four-year program of study and prayer for men intent on becoming monks and priests. Approximately 25 students from Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Germany, Sweden and Holland study there.

Mennonites might find more similarities partnering with Protestants in Syria, but Eldon says Protestant church groups often have other Western partners and funders.

And he believes the Syrian Orthodox and Mennonites would resonate with each other if they only knew each other better. "Fundamentally, I believe we both believe in ecumenical exchange," Eldon says. "We're both familiar with being a minority community. And we've both experienced a lot of persecution." Tens of thousands of Syrian Orthodox in Turkey were killed in the early part of the 20th century.

"I also learn a great deal from them—from their dedication, their discipline, their commitment, their wonderful love of the church, of their traditions, of their language and the way they incarnate that into something that is living," he says. "That I find inspiring."

He's also challenged by the way Syrian Orthodox approach theology with a strong emphasis on prayer. "I think that can serve as an example to Western seminarians," Eldon says.

The seminary holds four structured times of common prayer in a day, with many students spending additional time in private prayer. Eldon acknowledges that some people criticize written, common prayers for being canned and formulaic. And there's some truth to that.

But after observing and talking to students, he believes the prayers become a vital part of them. "They enter into it," he says. "I think it's noteworthy that so much of their time at the seminary is devoted to spiritual formation."

Eldon says Syrian Orthodox believers could also learn from the Mennonite commitment to being a peace church. He says it's an unfamiliar concept, and one the Syrian Orthodox church as a minority community would find difficult to embrace here. Eldon is planting seeds, promoting ideas like finding peaceful ways to resolve conflict.

And for all his love of the Syrian Orthodox, Mennonite worship still has its appeal. "There's nothing like a round of four-part harmony at our MCC Middle East retreat to send shivers up the spine," he says with a smile.

Carol Thiessen writes for Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

Few among none

How isolated Mennonites can use opportunities to grow in their faith and share it

by David A. Yost

Church planners tell us that a growing number of Mennonite church members relocate to rural, urban and international settings where no established Mennonite churches or other Mennonites exist.

For those isolated Mennonites considering the problem of retaining denominational identity, this separation raises difficult questions. Do I give up on the Mennonite church? Why bother trying to maintain a connection, especially if I'm the only one?

Our family who has spent the last 10 years confronting these issues, and we have found no easy solutions. However, several fundamental strategies have emerged that reaffirm our ability and desire to retain our bonds with the broader Mennonite church.

Seeking a Christian community: As a young family living on the Fort Apache Indian reservation in eastern Arizona, we made our church home in the local Franciscan Catholic mission for four years. After moving to a nearby off-reservation community, we selected a small Presbyterian congregation as our local church.

The strong Christian community we found in each of these congregations has proved critical to the growth of our faith as well as that of our young children. And while we can find specific theological or social issues within these churches that may conflict with our Mennonite upbringing, we cannot ignore our overriding call to be members of a worldwide Christian community. Temptations of Mennonite elitism must be set aside in favor of developing common bonds with other Christians.

Each of our non-Mennonite church experiences has taught us to be humble and accept our responsibilities as members of Christ's kingdom. And while we miss the emphasis of certain Mennonite themes, the Franciscans' commitment to peace and community and the Presbyterians' support of Christian education are examples of common ties with Mennonite traditions that have struck chords with us.

Maintaining ties: An important part of our struggle to maintain Mennonite identity has come through efforts to maximize connections with various Mennonite churches. Although the nearest established Mennonite congregation may be hours away, the work to include worship experiences in Mennonite churches during travel time away from home is worthwhile. As affiliate members of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Tucson, Ariz., we are able to attend only two or three services per year. However, our children have grown to recognize this church, as well as the churches of relatives and friends in other Mennonite communities, as comfortable homes with which we have a common bond.

Accepting opportunities to share: Many isolated Mennonites may find themselves in communities unfamiliar with Mennonite beliefs and dominated by other denominations or faiths. In our region, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints congregations outnumber the next most popular denominations by more than five to one. With a similarly strong LDS presence in our children's public schools, the opportunity for Mormon/Mennonite confusion arises. This can be frustrating, but it can also lead to opportunities to share and explain Mennonite beliefs. Even in our local Presbyterian church, people often ask us, "What's a Mennonite?" Scrambling to answer what Mennonites believe can be a part of one's spiritual growth and faith understanding.

Each of our non-Mennonite church experiences has taught us to be humble and accept our responsibilities as members of Christ's kingdom.

Taking advantage of church resources: Publications such as *The Mennonite* and *Mennonite Weekly Review* are valuable not only as links to the broader Mennonite world but also as tools for sharing with those who have questions. In some cases, Mennonite-produced materials may be enthusiastically accepted in local non-Mennonite congregations. After experimenting with several programs, our local Presbyterian church has adopted the Jubilee Sunday school curriculum. Mennonite Central Committee relief programs have become projects for vacation Bible school giving, and Mennonite Disaster Service materials have been useful resources in helping our community respond to local natural disasters. Each use of these materials presents another opportunity not only to explain our background to others but to reinforce Mennonite ideas within our family.

Supporting the future challenge: With isolation and diffusion of small denominations inevitable in our growing and mobile world, the challenges faced by individuals separated from established Mennonite congregations must be addressed. Often forgotten and frequently overlooked, isolated Mennonites benefit greatly from the encouragement to retain their Christian faith while secondarily establishing a structure to maintain their Mennonite identity. The sharing of such strategies is crucial as Mennonites find themselves more and more frequently facing a world in which they are few among none.

David A. Yost lives in Pinetop, Ariz.

CLC membership committee back to square one but hopes new provisions make idea acceptable

After considering the idea of current members having to opt in to Mennonite Church USA, developers of the new denomination's membership guidelines have been forced by legalities to return to grandfathering in everyone now in the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

But unlike a similar proposal that died after St. Louis 99, the guidelines' architects think they may have the provisions necessary for a plan—which is still under development—to pass in both the GC and MC delegate sessions at next summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn.

The opt-in concept, drafted by a committee of the Constituency Leaders Council, was generally well received at last month's CLC meeting, primarily by MC representatives. But following the meeting, the committee learned that the transformation process's legal team had flagged the plan. According to laws of incorporation, the new merged body cannot be created without members, which would have been the effect of the opt-in plan.

The everybody-in provision is similar to the proposal brought to St. Louis. But CLC chair Ervin Stutzman says the new draft has changes that could appeal to those members who criticized the St. Louis plan for putting them in fellowship with congregations disciplined for their positions on homosexuality.

One change is a clarification of provisional membership status, which was suggested in the St. Louis proposal. The new draft calls for a six-month window—from the Nashville convention in July 2001 until Feb. 1, 2002, the proposed legal date for the merger (see story below)—for current GC and MC members to become charter members of Mennonite Church USA.

After Feb. 1, 2002, those members that have not yet decided to join the new denomination or have withdrawn from the process would be on provisional, or nonvoting, membership status for up to five years. "Either way you're in because you're in legally anyway," Stutzman says.

By the end of that five-year period, provisional members would need to decide whether or not to join Mennonite Church USA.

Stutzman

A second change in the new draft is the incorporation of a statement on homosexuality into the guidelines. A similar statement had only been an attachment to the St. Louis guidelines and therefore lacked authority, Stutzman says. "There's a problem if everyone is in [the new denomination] because you can't speak to the conditions of everyone being in," he says.

The statement upholds a number of positions, including the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and the Saskatoon and Purdue statements on sexuality. By including the statement more explicitly in the body of the guidelines, Stutzman says, it establishes expectations for Mennonite Church USA members.

The revised guidelines have been sent to all GC and MC Nashville delegates for their feedback. The guidelines will need to be finalized by next spring for the Executive Board to bring them to Nashville for action. A two-thirds vote by both the GC and the MC assemblies will be required for passage.—*Rich Preheim*

Pa. congregation lets justice pour

When Vietnamese Mennonite Fellowship in Upper Darby, Pa., serves coffee, it's not just pouring cups of joe. The congregation is also offering economic and environmental justice.

Vietnamese Mennonite Fellowship is the first congregation to participate in "Share a Cup, Share a Concern," a new program of Ten Thousand Villages to promote fairly traded coffee.

Fairly traded coffee programs allow small coffee farmers a chance to compete in an industry dominated by huge companies. The "Share a Cup, Share a Concern" coffee is grown using environmentally sensitive methods.

"We want to help people," says Quang Tran, pastor of Vietnamese Mennonite Fellowship. "We were refugees, and we think this is a way we can give thanks for the people who helped us. We want to help small countries and small farmers. Besides, the coffee is good."

The program makes coffee available even to congregations that aren't close to a Ten Thousand Villages store. Twenty-one congregations and one retreat center have already joined.—*MCC News Service*

The date has been set for merger completion

Like a longtime-courting couple who finally decide to marry, a date has been set for the transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) into Mennonite Church USA.

Mark it on your calendars: Feb. 1, 2002.

That date—six months after the Nashville, Tenn., convention—is set in the current draft of the proposed membership guidelines as the deadline for deciding who is in Mennonite Church USA for legal reasons.

But Feb. 1, 2002, is also being used by other parts of the transformation process, says Transformation Team director Jim Schrag, such as the target date for the establishment of new boards.—*Rich Preheim*

New top board may gain program work

Plan would shift responsibilities from COE and MBCM

WASHINGTON—A new denomination could mean virtually unprecedented responsibilities for its top board, according to an idea now being explored. But that has also raised concerns about micromanaging and increased workloads for the 20-member Executive Board.

The Transformation Team, responsible for directing the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC), is considering placing congregational resources—ministries now found in the Commission on Education (COE) and Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM)—with the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board rather than with a separate program board.

"This is a radically different understanding of what executive leadership is," Transformation Team director Jim Schrag told the Executive Board during the board's June 17-18 meeting in Washington.

The old GC and MC general boards had some direct oversight responsibilities: The GC board had ministerial leadership, while the MC board included the historical and peace committees among other initiatives. But full-blown programs, such as missions and publishing, were handled by specific boards and commissions.

Giving program responsibilities to the Executive Board grew out of Transformation Team plans to relocate other COE and MBCM work. MBCM's portfolio had included ministerial leadership and youth convention planning, which have been shifted to the Executive Board, according to the Transformation Team's plans. Meanwhile, publishing, a major component of COE, is proposed to go to a separate publication board.

These moves left COE and MBCM only with congregational resources, such as worship assistance and age-specific education—hardly enough to maintain a program board, COE and MBCM officials said.

The possible addition of such responsibilities left board member Susan Gingerich wondering if it will mean micromanaging. Will the Executive Board have to supervise staff members, she asked? Will the board have to establish policies?

Schrag said the board will have to delegate responsibilities to reference groups.

He also said that the plan provides flexibility. Schrag noted that a program board may not always be the best way to meet denominational needs. "It calls for leadership and connecting leadership throughout the entire Mennonite Church," he said.

While discussing the addition of responsibilities, board member Nancy Rodriguez-Lora raised concerns about the possible loss of responsibility for organizations of people of color. Called associate groups in the former Mennonite Church, they had been located with the MC General Board.

"They're dependent on the General Board or a program board for finances," Rodriguez-Lora said. "They're up in the air."

Schrag said a meeting is being scheduled with the groups representing people of color to address ways of relating with denominational structures.—*Rich Preheim*

Church plaques are signs of the times

The creation of a new Mennonite denomination has meant a lot of work for various church officials—and for one woodworker.

Nearly every day for more than three months, John Reimer of Winnipeg was in his basement workshop, making 300 plaques with the new Mennonite Church Canada name and logo. The plaques will be given to representatives of each congregation at this summer's Mennonite Church Canada assembly in Lethbridge, Alta.

"The intent is for each church to display in a visible way that they are part of the greater church," says John Lohrenz, Mennonite Church Canada director of constituency relations and stewardship.

The plaques were Lohrenz's brainchild, and he talked Reimer into making them.

"It has been a real honor to be able to do something visible for the church," says Reimer, a retired government auditor and a member of First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. "A new thing is happening with Mennonite Church Canada, and it is exciting to get in on the ground floor."—*Canadian Mennonite*

Vada Snider

Student scientists

Allison Epp, a Bethel College senior from Beatrice, Neb., (left) helps Joel Gaeddert of Leewood, Kan., apply electrodes to Tabitha Cherry of Moundridge, Kan. Gaeddert and Cherry were two high school students at Bethel's summer science institute June 11-16 on the North Newton, Kan., campus. The students were recording brain electrical activity and eye movement.

Former persecutor called to give leadership to burgeoning Filipino Mennonite church

LAGUNA, Philippines–When the Integrated Mennonite Churches (IMC) of the Philippines called Ambrocio Porcincula to oversee their Laguna-Manila District and moderate the newly formed board of bishops, they couldn't have chosen a more unlikely man.

Twenty years ago, Porcincula, a politician and school principal in Laguna, had bitterly opposed the Mennonite congregation planted near his home. He rallied his students to stone the building and disturb the services. He hated the noisy prayers and songs that rang out from the little church. Then one day, a pastor told him, "Brother, the Lord needs you," and Porcincula's life was never the same.

Luis Lumibao, the new missions director of the IMC, remembers being inside the church when Porcincula and his ruffians attacked. Today, he says, it feels better having Porcincula on the same team, rallying young people to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth, something the new bishop does with unmatched zeal.

Porcincula and three others were ordained as the first Filipino bishops during IMC's seventh annual Believers' Conference in April. Lancaster Conference bishops Freeman J. Miller and H. Howard Witmer conducted the ordination. Lancaster has had a relationship with Filipino Mennonites for more than 30 years through Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Miller and Witmer each spoke three times. One of Miller's addresses was on biblical simplicity. "How do you teach biblical simplicity at an assembly of 40 Mennonite churches when none of the pastors own cars and when the high school where you meet has only a trickle of tap water during some morning hours, where rice is the standard meal three times a day and where mattresses are a luxury?" Miller wondered.

The assembly drew 212 people, but many others attended the dynamic youth-led evening worship services. Besides bishops, the IMC also ordained one new pastor and commissioned a new board of trustees, new youth officers and missionaries.

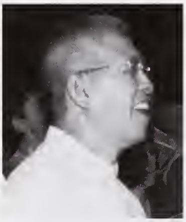
On the final afternoon of the conference, the more than 50 pastors each gave a report of last year's activities for each congregation. Most of the churches are growing and have numerous church plants planned or under way.

Jose Basa, another new bishop, reported baptizing 100 people during the last year and moving his growing group six times to find large enough facilities. His congregation is now planning to start a daughter congregation.

One pastor hikes two to three hours into the jungle for Bible studies with pygmies. Another has weekday Bible studies with business and professional people in downtown Manila and plans to start 10 new churches this year.

Although the IMC's membership stands at 1,750, the congregations minister to three times that number during a normal week. The denomination includes 16 dialects.

While the growth is encouraging, it can't be fast enough to suit Porcincula. He's making up for lost time. "Maybe in 10 years, we can host the Asia Mennonite Conference," he says. "Then Mennonite World Conference."—*Jewel Showalter with Freeman J. Miller and H. Howard Witmer for EMM News Service*


EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Maybe in 10 years, we can host the Asia Mennonite Conference. Then Mennonite World Conference.

—*Ambrocio Porcincula*

Mennonite Women executives resign

NEWTON, Kan.—After sharing leadership in the formation of one of the first organizations to be created for the emerging denomination, Mennonite Women's executive co-coordinators will step down this year.

Susan Jantzen, working from Newton, will leave on Aug. 1. Lara Hall Blosser of Scottdale, Pa., will conclude her work sometime before Dec. 31. Jantzen is seeking other options following a change in employment for her husband. Blosser will continue graduate studies.

Mennonite Women was created three years ago by the merger of the General Conference Mennonite Church's Women in Mission and Women's Missionary and Service Commission of the Mennonite Church. Jantzen was Women in Mission coordinator and Blosser executive secretary for WMSC.

Although their reasons for leaving are different, Jantzen and Blosser say they decided to depart at about the same time in order to give Mennonite Women opportunity to reshape its structure and executive staff. The organization is seeking new staff.

"The gifts Lara and Susan brought to [Mennonite Women] were complementary and helped us during a time of significant transformation," says board president Elizabeth Klassen of Kitchener, Ont. "Both are very gifted. We will miss them."

Taiwanese hospital dedicates addition

HUALIEN, Taiwan—A Taiwanese hospital started as a result of Mennonite relief work in the 1950s continues to grow and expand. Mennonite Christian Hospital in Hualien dedicated a new building on May 11. The addition, connected to the existing structures, provides space for health care, education, research and staff housing.

The hospital was started by Mennonite Central Committee in 1954 and later became part of the Commission on Overseas Mission's work in Taiwan. The hospital was transferred to a local board in 1994.

Today the hospital has 500 in-patient beds and sees an average of 1,100 patients a day in the clinic. The 760-member staff includes 270 nurses and 40 full-time and 30 part-time physicians.—*GCMC News Service*

Christmas Fund appeal generates $47,000

ELKHART, Ind.—Mennonite congregations contributed $47,126 to the 1999 Christmas Sharing Fund appeal, only the third time the annual effort has exceeded $45,000 since its inception nearly 30 years ago.

The money will help fund several projects, including the shipment and distribution of 2,700 metric tons of wheat to drought-plagued southeastern Ethiopia. The 1999 Christmas Sharing Fund had originally been planned to support earthquake relief efforts in Turkey, but MCC had raised enough funds for that project by the end of 1999.

Christmas Sharing Fund receipts will also support the Chicago Education Initiative, an inter-agency program to strengthen Mennonite leadership in Chicago. The effort is sponsored by Goshen (Ind.) College, Mennonite Board of Missions, Illinois Conference and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart. Pilot seminars and courses are planned for this fall.

MCC exploring opportunities in Lebanon

BEIRUT, Lebanon—Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon last month might have opened the door to new service opportunities, say Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) officials in the country.

"One of the ways that we hope to help is to fill the void in the field of conflict resolution," says Randal Nickel, co-director of MCC's Lebanon programs. "There are intense feelings from village to village in terms of which foreign power the village supported, as well as personal issues. MCC has been working with conflict-resolution training through our local partners for several years."

Other potential areas for work, Nickel says, include infrastructure development, agricultural programs, landmine cleanup and microloan programs.—*MCC News Service*

Hispanic youth meet at Goshen College

GOSHEN, Ind.—About 30 teenagers, youth sponsors and pastors gathered on the Goshen (Ind.) College campus June 11-14 for a first-time Hispanic youth leadership conference. The event, conducted in both English and Spanish, was sponsored by the college.

Workshop topics included leading Bible studies and prayer ministries, working for social justice, being church leaders in a racist society and dealing with dating and sexuality. Activities also included worship services and recreation.

African leader dies after long illness

BULAWAYO, Zimbabwe—Stephen N. Ndlovu, bishop of the Brethren in Christ (BIC) in Zimbabwe and a leader in inter-Mennonite work, died June 12 after a long illness. His age was not given.

A BIC bishop for the past 10 years, Ndlovu had traveled extensively as a representative of the African Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Fellowship and Mennonite World Conference. He had been involved in mediation efforts between Ethiopia's communist government and the Meserete Kristos Church, the Mennonite church in Ethiopia.—*MWC News Service*

by the way ...

An estimated 10 percent of all U.S. and Canadian Mennonites work in health- and human services-related fields.—*Mennonite Encyclopedia*

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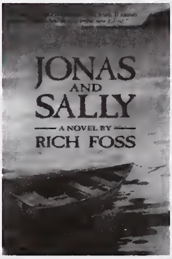

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"A welcome addition to any fiction collection." — Booklist

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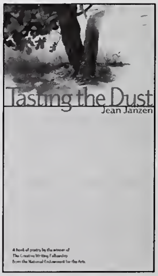

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Events

Hispanic Mennonite Convention and AMIGA Assembly, Aug. 3-6, Orlando, Fla.
Arvada Mennonite Church 40th anniversary of church building dedication Aug. 12-13. Call 303-424-6261.
55th annual Eastern Civilian Public Service reunion, Aug. 16-17, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center. Contact Irvin E. Cordell, 717-328-2746.

Workers

Bergen, Wes, Newton, Kan., was licensed April 2 at New Creation Fellowship, Newton.
Bogard, Marlene, Newton, Kan., has begun as minister of outreach and nurture at First Mennonite Church, Newton.
Entz, Carol, Newton, Kan., has begun as minister of congregational life at First Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.
Kauffmann, Nancy, Goshen, Ind., will serve as conference regional minister for Indiana-Michigan Conference beginning mid-August.
Slagel, Barbara J., Millersburg, Ind., has been named first chief information officer and vice president of information technology for Mennonite Mutual Aid.

Births

Beachy, Olivia Lee, April 13, to Crystal and Junior Beachy, Millersburg, Ohio.
Gehman, Carson Scott, June 6, to Kimberly (Harnish) and Wendell Gehman, Pine Ridge, S.D.
Harms, David Owen, April 24, to Ashley and Teri-Lyn (Heinrichs) Harms, Winnipeg.
Hartzler, Lazarus Jacob, April 28, to Carla (Brenneman) and Tim Hartzler, Marshallville, Ohio.
Mahoney, Krysten Nicole, May 19, to Christy (Holland) and Keith Mahoney, Schwenksville, Pa.
Nisly-Nagle, Douglas Abraham, June 1, to Ken and Sheryl Nisly-Nagle, Cincinnati.
Sellars, Matthew Tyler, June 5, to Addie and Jonathan Sellars, Telford, Pa.
Showalter, Noah Wade, May 24, to Jonathan and Rebecca (Spencer) Showalter.

Marriages

Braun/Friesen: Joel Braun, Altona, Man., and Melinda Friesen, Altona, May 6 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.
Epp/Kline: Matthew Epp, Henderson, Neb., and Jennifer Kline, Papillion, Neb., June 3 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Ernesti/Peters: Renee Ernesti, Aloys, Neb., and Kolby Peters, Henderson, Neb., May 27 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Fehr/Neufeld: Abe Fehr, Winkler, Man., and Denita Neufeld, Winkler, June 16 at Altona (Man.) Bergthaler Mennonite Church.
Hilty/Mavis: Darla Hilty, Marshallville, Ohio, and Jason Mavis, Edgerton, Ohio, May 27 at Wilmot, Ohio.
Hochstetler/Mesquita: Debra Hochstetler, Brasilia, Brazil, and Mauricio Mesquita, Brasilia, May 20 at Brasilia Community Church.
Larsen/Williams: Audra Lynn Larsen, Elkton, Va., and Randall Allen Williams, Elkton, June 3 at Pond Lake, Elkton.
Pletcher/Springer: Nathan Pletcher, Goshen, Ind., and Andrea Springer, Middlebury, Ind., April 15 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Rupp/Yoder: Jason Rupp, Goshen, Ind., and Tonya Yoder, Goshen, May 27 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Deaths

Bechtel, Sarah Elizabeth Whirledge, 80, Goshen, Ind., died May 16 of cancer. Spouse: Lowell R. Bechtel. Parents: Eli and Amelia Whirledge (deceased). Other survivors: children Thomas, Edward, Jane Troup; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 19 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.
Benner, James, 87, Harrisonburg, Va., died May 2. Spouse: Della Kiser Benner. Parents: Rhine and Anna Benner (deceased). Other survivors: children Norman, Ruth Dean; six grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 4 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Bergman, Kathryn Elizabeth, Harleysville, Pa., was stillborn May 11. Parents: Merle and Beth Hershey Bergman. Funeral: Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.
Buhler, Annie Fehr, 83, Altona, Man., died May 21. Spouse: Henry Buhler (deceased). Survivors: children Jake, Tena Giesbrecht, Dave, Henry, George; 11 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 24 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.
Landes, Sallie Anders, 90, Souderton, Pa., died May 27. Spouse: Cyrus Landes (deceased). Parents: Menno and Lizzie Moyer Anders (deceased). Survivors: children Royden, Ferrel; eight children; 18 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: May 31 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.
Lantz, Lewis Jr., 74, Wauseon, Ohio., died May 25. Spouse: Eloise Kast Lantz (deceased). Parents: Lewis and Alice Lantz (deceased). Survivors: children Susan Henricks, Sandra Lantz, Kathleen Demaline, Barbara Allen, Ronald, David, James; 20 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 27 at Inlet Mennonite Church.
Leatherman, Florence Myers, 90, Souderton, Pa., died May 25 of lung cancer. Spouse: Harvey Leatherman (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Rosa Myers (deceased). Survivors: Joyce Geissinger, Donald, Russell, Harold, Herbert; 21 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 30 at Deep Run Mennonite Church East, Perkasie, Pa.
Lowe, Effie, 79, Harrisonburg, Va., died May 22. Spouse: Roger Milton Lowe (deceased). Survivors: children Loretta Roach, Jessie Johnson, Elizabeth Ann Moyers; 10 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 25 at Mount Clinton Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.
Morningstar, Charlotte Miller, 89, Goshen, Ind., died May 28 of cancer. Spouse: Titus Morningstar (deceased). Parents: Elmer and Ida Mae Miller (deceased). Funeral: June 1 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.
Nofziger, Alverda Stutzman, 70, Lebanon, Ore., died from a blood clot. Spouse: Daniel Nofziger (deceased). Parents: Ivan and Katie Stutzman (deceased). Survivors: children Terry, Tommy, Doyle, Tina Miller; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 5 at Lebanon Mennonite Church.
Nogle, Harold, 88, West Liberty, Ohio, died May 18. Spouse: Beulah Smith Nogle. Parents: John and Josie Downing Nogle (deceased). Other survivors: children Kia Cross, Mitzi Fix, Cody Plummer; stepchildren Paul Craig, William Craig, Nancy Slonecker; 18 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 22 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty.
Ratzlaff, Edna Friesen, 75, Henderson, Neb., died June 2. Spouse: Marvin Ratzlaff. Parents John and Marie Epp Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Philip, Ralph, Mary Havenridge; six grandchildren. Funeral: June 6 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.
Schlabach, Jeff, 33, Kalona, Iowa, died May 26 in a car accident. Spouse: Sheryl Schlabach. Other survivors: children Jenson, Simon, Reid, Avery, Autumn. Funeral: May 30 at Kalona Mennonite Church.
Unsicker, Dorothy Kipfer, 88, Hopedale, Ill., died May 31. Spouse: Alvin (deceased). Parents: Chris and Susie Miller Kipfer (deceased). Survivors: child Virginia Oswald; 10 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 3 at Hopedale Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

- **Smithville Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***associate pastor of youth and young adults.*** Candidate must desire to see young people seek and follow Christ.

Please send resume to Pastoral Relations, Smithville Mennonite Church, Box 455, Smithville, OH 44677; email <SMC@Valkyrie.net>.

- **Herald Press** seeks applicants for ***children's editor.*** Edits monthly children's magazine. Develops and directs children's curriculum projects to meet the needs of Anabaptist-Mennonite congregations in North America. Degree in elementary education or similar area. Seminary studies and/or experience in curriculum planning, editing and writing a plus. Begins August 2000.

Send resume to Awanda Pritts, Human Resources Director, Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks a ***graphic designer.*** 12-month, full-time position. Bachelor's degree in art, communications, graphic arts or related field required. At least three years in graphic design required. Will be involved in all aspects of creating printed material for the university, focusing on the more complex projects.

For more information view our website: <www.emu.edu>. Application deadline: July 15, 2000. EMU Human Resources, 540-432-4108; hyperlink mail to <restoa@emu.edu>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks ***director of student programs and new student orientation,*** an 11-month full-time position. Master's degree in student affairs, educational administration, youth ministries or bachelor's degree and significant experience in young adult ministries. Responsible for new student orientation programs, campus activities supervision, recreational sports, leadership education programs, and commuter and married student services.

For more information, view our website: <www.emu.edu>. Application deadline: June 30, 2000. Contact EMU Human Resources, 540-432-4108; email <restoa@emu.edu>.

- **Central Christian School** is seeking qualified people to fill the following positions: ***business manager, guidance counselor, admissions director*** (50%), ***capital campaign support staff*** (50%), ***tutoring and special education supervisor, high school social studies teacher, high school industrial arts teacher*** (70%), ***high school math teacher*** (100% second semester only), ***middle school language arts teacher*** (50%), ***learning center teachers*** (K-1, 50%; grades 2-3, 100%; grades 4-5, 100%), ***learning center administrative secretary*** (10 months).

Contact Frederic Miller, Principal, Central Christian School, P.O. Box 9, Kidron, OH 44636; 330-857-7311; email <ccs_fmiller@tccsa.net>.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for ***interim head coach, men's basketball,*** a one-year part-time interim position beginning July 1, 2000, for the 2000-2001 academic year. Responsibilities include recruiting quality student-athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budgets and schedules. B.A. required, M.A. preferred, with instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the college level. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

Please send resume and three letters of reference to Paul Keim, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax (219) 535-7060; email <dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through our web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment." Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for ***head coach, women's soccer,*** a part-time position beginning July 1, 2000, for the 2000-2001 academic year and beyond. Responsibilities include recruiting quality student-athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; planning, organizing and implementing budgets and schedules. B.A. required, M.A. preferred, with instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the college level. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

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- **New Danville Mennonite School**, Lancaster, Pa., seeks teacher applications for the following positions: ***full-time K-8 PE, and elementary; part-time home ec. and Spanish.*** Contact Judi Mollenkof, NDMS, 393 Long Lane, Lancaster, PA 17603; 717-872-2506; fax 717-872-5201.

- **Prince of Peace Mennonite Church** (Anchorage, Alaska), a small, family-oriented church founded on Anabaptist teachings, seeks part-time ***pastoral leadership*** July 2000. Inquiries to Rosetta Landis, 907-337-5813 or email <krjlandis@netscape.net>. Information available upon request.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat**, a dynamic, multifaceted Mennonite camping ministry in the Pocono Mountains of Pa., seeks ministry-minded people to fill two key positions:

Director of operations: Will ensure a positive guest experience through supervision of housekeeping, food service and maintenance managers; oversight of building projects, management of operational resources. Experience helpful in personnel management, project/construction oversight and administration. Strong interpersonal and organizational skills a must. Position will begin early fall.

Construction coordinator: Will contribute to ministry growth by carrying out renovation and construction projects. Responsibilities include project planning, purchasing supplies, hands-on construction and some staff/volunteer/contractor supervision. Also involves general maintenance work. Experience in building trades a necessity. Position begins immediately.

Salary and liberal benefits package for both positions. On-camp housing available. Send resume to Personnel, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 570-595-7505; fax 570-595-0328; email <retreat@enter.net>; web <www.sprucelake.org>.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** seeks the following workers. All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

Communications writer/editor. Qualifications: writing and editing training or experience; service experience in two or more of the continents where MCC has workers; bachelor's degree. Some travel required. Needs to be able to work with a wide variety of people. Ability to take photographs and knowledge of Spanish a real plus. The last day to receive applications is July 10, 2000. Start date is Aug. 21, 2000.

Communications global educator. Qualifications: bachelor's degree and/or experience in communications or education/teaching, especially adult or nonformal education; experience with a mission or service organization; committed to both respect and challenge MCC's constituents; ability to work with others to help them achieve effectiveness in their communications and education. The last day to receive applications is July 24, 2000. Start date is Sept. 5, 2000.

Administrative assistant in Latin America/Caribbean department. Qualifications: skilled in office procedures, word processing and typing; good at organizational and detail work; ability to work both independently and as part of a team; English language ability, oral and written; preferably also a working knowledge of Spanish; understanding of and respect for MCC workers and constituency in the region and in North America; interest in Latin America and Caribbean people and issues. The last day to receive applications is July 14, 2000. Start date is Sept. 5, 2000.

All three of these positions are two-year salaried or voluntary service positions at the MCC binational headquarters in Akron, Pa. For more information or to receive job descriptions, please contact Prem Dick or Goldie Kuhns at MCC Human Resources, 717-859-1151; email <psd@mcc.org> or <gpk@mcc.org>.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite,* call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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by Rich Preheim

Go figure

A seminary education is not just for would-be pastors anymore. In fact, fewer than 30 percent of seminarians under the age of 30 are planning to go into congregational ministry, according to a recent survey. Instead, students are looking to careers in counseling, chaplaincy, education and social services.

Those findings were among those from a survey of members of the Association of Theological Schools, an organization of 237 Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox seminaries in the United States and Canada. Results were recently published in *Horizons,* a newsletter of the Fund for Theological Education.

The survey also discovered that 60 percent of students are or plan to be ordained—65 percent of those over the age of 30 and 54 percent of those under 30. The survey further reported that—surprise!—some groups of students, such as racial minorities, single and younger students, have greater financial need than those students in other groups.

Among other survey results:

- The average age of entering seminarians is 35.
- Thirty-four percent of seminarians over age 30 studied science, math or technical studies as undergraduates, the highest figure for that age group. Among those students under 30, 48 percent studied the humanities, religion or philosophy as undergraduates.
- Women make up about a third of seminary student bodies.

The path to doctrinal unity

Anglicans and Catholics continue to move toward "full organic unity" following an international meeting last month of 26 top-ranking bishops from the two denominations in Mississauga, Ont. But they also discovered a number of obstacles still in their way, reports *ChristianWeek.*

For more than three decades, the two churches have been trying to heal their 16th-century split. The May 15-19 meeting, which drew participants from 13 countries, produced a call for a commission to prepare a joint affirmation of faith. This would formally express the degree of agreement already existing between the Anglican and Catholic churches, such as creeds, much scriptural interpretation, episcopal structure, baptism and liturgy.

But remaining roadblocks include differing views on papal authority, the nature of salvation, the Eucharist and the ordination of women.

Ain't Saints anymore

The Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints can identify with the difficulties of naming a denomination. But at this spring's RLDS international conference, after bandying the issue about for six years, members approved changing their name to Community of Christ, effective sometime next year.

The RLDS, based in Independence, Mo., is one of several branches of Mormonism and is more moderate than its larger and more well-known Salt Lake City, Utah, cousins, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Former RLDS president Wallace B. Smith said the name change is an opportunity to get away from longstanding "feelings of negativity" associated with the current name, according to *Saints Herald,* the denominational magazine.

New president Peter A. Judd said Community of Christ emphasizes both the importance of Christ and of connectedness to others. "As members of the church, we are called to model the kind of community to which God calls the whole world," he said.

The perils of overseas mission work

Ken Mulholland's stint as a mission worker in Costa Rica was particularly colored by one experience. One night at home he let his oldest daughter paint his toenails with bright red nail polish. Then the next morning, at the seminary where Mulholland was teaching, students led a chapel service that, he tells Latin America Mission News Service, "to my surprise turned out to be the first foot-washing service in the history of the school."

Tidbits

- **A group of cowgirls has organized the Christian Women's Professional Barrel Racing Ministries. —*The Joyful Noiseletter***
- **In a recent survey, only 20 percent of Britons associated the millennium with the 2,000th birthday of Jesus.—*Israelennium News***
- **The United Methodist Church has denounced Chief Wahoo, the cartoonish Native American mascot of baseball's Cleveland Indians.—*ESPN the Magazine***

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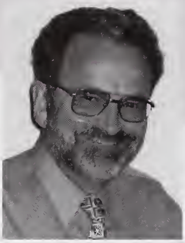

J. Lorne Peachey

How to keep one's spiritual life on track

"If Christianity is true, then it must be the most important aspect of one's life," Arthur Paul Boers writes in this issue (page 4).

How does one make that happen? So many things vie for our time and attention these days. Couple that with our tendency to center our universe around ourselves, and we ask: How does one make faith in God and a relationship with God most important in our lives?

Boers' answer is to become accountable to an Anglican Benedictine monastery. That's a radical step for a Mennonite, who belongs to a group that shunned such things as monasticism some 475 years ago when we began. But with an emphasis on commitment to God, lived out in everyday life, Boers finds this relationship a meaningful way to keep his spiritual life on track.

My own longing to grow in my relationship with God and to be accountable for how I live my faith has taken me on two other routes.

Faith is too important to go it alone. What we believe and how we live must be tested with other disciples.

One of these is a special relationship I have with a friend, a relationship we call spiritual companionship. Every two or three weeks, we talk for up to two hours by phone, asking each other questions about how we are experiencing God in our lives, both the Spirit's affirmations and God's disciplining voice. We also ask each other questions about how we're living out our beliefs: in our families, in our congregations and in our world. We confess our sins to each other, make commitments for change and growth and hold each other accountable for previous commitments.

We are, in short, the voice and ear of God for each other. We affirm where we believe God is leading the other. We sometimes question whether the other is following personal inclinations more than the Spirit. But, most of all, we listen to each other talk about our spiritual struggles and our growth.

This is a relationship that has taught me much about honesty, vulnerability and accountability. As I open up the secret part of myself to another before God, I find cleansing, reassurance and courage. I am also learning to be truthful. The last question my spiritual companion asks me each time is, "Have you just lied to me?"

Good as it is, spiritual companionship is not enough for me, however. Because this relationship means so much to us, we both face the temptation of sometimes couching our questions and answers in ways that will preserve our friendship, pushing only so hard with each other when we find resistance. Sometimes I need a more objective, less-involved view of how I'm doing spiritually. So I've also chosen to have a spiritual director.

Once a month we get together for an hour or so. After a period of meditation and prayer, my director listens to me talk about my relationship with God. As I talk, my director probes: Have you thought about this? Are you sure this is God's voice? Why the concern about … (whatever my current preoccupation)?

Through these sessions, I've learned much about my need for control, recognition and even sometimes wanting to be God. I've learned about the subtle ways I glorify myself and minimize others. I've also learned to recognize the voice of God and the presence of the Spirit in my life in ways I've not known before.

Spiritual companionship and spiritual direction are just two ways we who follow Jesus have available to keep our spiritual life alive. Boers has found another as a Benedictine oblate. Small groups, Sunday school classes and mentoring relationships are additional ways to check one's spiritual health and keep oneself growing in a relationship with God. The method is not what's most important; finding a meaningful way to be accountable is.

One's faith is too important to go it alone. What we believe and how we live out those beliefs must be tested with other disciples. As humans we are prone to self-deception, often equating the voice of God with our own needs and desires. We must help each other by questioning, probing, counseling and affirming.

Time-consuming? Yes. Scary. Absolutely. But my faith is worth both. An honest relationship with another, who serves as an ambassador of God for me, has been invaluable in helping make my words and actions mesh. This is the way I make sure my spiritual life is on track.—*jlp*

More information:

Marlene Kropf of the Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries staff, Elkhart, Ind., keeps a list of people trained in spiritual direction and information on how to contact them. Call 219-294-7523 or email: <mbcm2@juno.com>.

For a list of the questions my friend and I use as spiritual companions, call 800-790-2498 or email: <theMennonite@mph.org>.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

July 4, 2000

follow Jesus the Lamb

page 4

5 America the peacekeeper

8 New merged conference comes with joy

10 Divisions felt through Indonesian church

15 Make prayer and evangelism a priority

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

The wages of sin is disunity

Church polity is a "form of government or code of regulations of a religious denomination" (Merriam Webster). Polity between conferences or congregations does not constitute disunity; rather, it is diversity. Jesus understood diversity. Paul experienced extreme diversity with the different cultures that became part of the growing Christian community. The separation of church and state in America has spawned a myriad of autonomous churches of every denomination, who have polities of their own. The Mennonite groups are not immune.

In 45 years in the ministry, I haven't seen all the disunity that seems to plague some people today. Our Mennonite groups work together on many levels, such as Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Disaster Service and relief sales. Five years ago, Steve Wingfield of Harrisonburg, Va., held a countywide revival in Wooster, Ohio. Eighty-eight congregations cooperated, including many Mennonite ones. That was diversity in unity that resulted in a spiritual understanding and appreciation of our commitment to Christ, and souls were saved. But I daresay that there are still 88 different congregational polities among those churches, and that is not wrong.

We often confuse unity with tolerance that allows any type of conduct or thought, and no one challenges anything. We Mennonites seem to be so carried away with peace and love that we have forgotten that God loves us. He will not tolerate continued sin. The church that allows sin to go unconfessed or unchallenged has a false sense of love and no semblance of unity. Where sin is allowed to exist, people will bicker. Let's get rid of the sin and bickering, then love and unity can blossom like a flower.—*Sanford C. Oyer, Wooster, Ohio*

Biblical usage

I was raised an Iowa Mennonite to believe the Bible is the supreme guide for Christian moral and ethical standards. I was taught that we need the Holy Spirit to decipher which codes are meant for us literally and which, if any, need "interpretation."

Was the Bible given to us to provide the final answer on questions such as homosexuality? Or was it written to encourage us in a Spirit-led process like first-century folks followed to find their truth? Should we copy their process from the Bible or the truths the Holy Spirit led them to? Let's be honest, the Bible is a moral authority for process, much more than results. Otherwise we Mennonites would still forbid braiding of hair and removing of veils from the heads of women in church. We would forbid them to open their mouths there, and we would have slaves and multiple marriages, obeying Bible teachings that would have a widow be a second wife for her brother-in-law, etc. If the Bible really was written to give us the final answers, we wouldn't need the Holy Spirit to lead us into all truth. The fact that some sins are clearly defined in the Bible should not excuse us from following the process the Holy Spirit led the early church through. The route I was taught I now see as lazy spirituality. And that includes easy, standard answers to the question about homosexuality and other sin issues that divide Christians.

Peter, on Cornelius' housetop, heard a message from the Holy Spirit that directly undermined the moral authority of his Bible and his church to define sin and its penalty instead of encouraging process. Without the recorded process of God's Spirit working then, we could still be following the purity regulations in Leviticus. Let's not think the mind change was easy for Peter. Let's trust God to give us direction, too, with our diversity of opinion, while we obey the greatest commandment, as Jesus identified it.—*Dave Graber, Hardin, Mont.*

It would seem to me that to believe in the literal, verbal inspiration of the Bible makes our God less intelligent. Some examples:

- There are two accounts of creation in Genesis 1 and 2. The account that biblical scholars believe was written earliest begins in chapter 2, verse 4b. This account has human beings created first. In the later account, beginning with chapter 1, human beings are the culmination of creation. If God dictated this account, then his memory must not be very good.
- There seem to be several different versions of the Ten Commandments.
- Luke, in his story of the birth of Jesus, has the birth taking place during the reign of Augustus, when Quirinius was governor of Syria. How could this be when Augustus was dead for 10 years before Quirinius became governor? If read literally, God must have a poor memory of history.

One could, of course, cite many other examples. The point is that the Bible consists of different books written by different authors reflecting the theology of the place and time during which they wrote. The Bible was writ-

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readers say

ten by human beings trying to determine the nature of the God whom they worshiped and in whom they believed. Thus to use proof texts in the Bible to determine whether a particular action or lifestyle is sin is questionable at best. We are still learning and will continue to learn and should therefore use the best knowledge that we have available.

The Jesus that the Gospel writers give me a glimpse of taught a lifestyle of all-inclusive love. Would we not do well to do the same?—*Hartzel Schmidt, North Newton, Kan.*

Letter postscript

Robert Zani correctly notes that Mennonites did not sign the recent letter calling for a moratorium on the death penalty (Readers Say, June 13). In fact, the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office agreed to sign this letter if the drafter would have more clearly stated that some of the signers wish to see the death penalty abolished, not simply fixed. The full text of the letter left the murky impression that signers might support the death penalty if it were simply applied in a more judicious way. The drafter chose not to make changes to the letter, so MCC's name did not appear with the list of signers.—*J. Daryl Byler, director, Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office, Washington*

What is and what was

Re "Our Cosmic Connection" by Calvin King (Speaking Out, June 6): King seems to be following evolution, not science. Science observes what is; describing what was is simply conjecture. I encourage King to read the May 22 issue of *Christianity Today,* which raises serious questions about evolution. Does God need evolution? No. Did Darwin? Yes, because he didn't need God.—*Jerry Roth, Chambersburg, Pa.*

Cover illustration from "Resurrection" by Piero dela Francesca, Religious News Service

Do you promise to follow Jesus, the Lamb?

by John Rempel

Detail from "Resurrection" by Piero della Francesca, Religious News Service

Included in the new *Mennonite Minister's Manual* is an old set of baptismal questions from the 1700s. Question number two reads, "Do you promise, by God's grace, to follow Jesus, the Lamb, all the days of your life, ready to love your enemies and suffer wrong nonresistantly?"

It is a stunning question. It would be folly to risk answering it except for the three crucial words "by God's grace." Even then, the thought of being asked that question just before you're baptized is breathtaking.

Question number two is based on Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7). There he asks those who would be his disciples to yield mastery over their lives to him. They are to abandon themselves to God's kingdom and its righteousness. That they might do so, Jesus promises he will free them from worries about their security. He even says they are not to defend themselves—even when their lives are in danger.

It is impossible to hear that demand of Jesus without crying out in protest: "What about my child when threatened? What about my country when it is under attack?" Mennonites are among a cloud of witnesses—individuals and communities—throughout church history who have said: "By the grace of God, I will offer forgiveness rather than revenge when I am wronged. By the grace of God, I am willing to die rather than kill."

This conviction is endangered among peace churches at a time when other Christian groups are reconsidering it. First, I want to suggest why our peace conviction is hard to hang onto. Second, and more important, I want to make better known the movement toward nonviolence.

In the midst of Mennonites' handwringing about the hard gift of peace, Christians from nonpacifist churches around the world are turning to pacifist denominations and to their understanding of Jesus' way of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Culture and money: During the 20th century, Mennonites in North America have become more and more a part of the society around them. Culture and money have attracted us to mainstream society, but so has a sense of responsibility for the people around us. That's why we sponsor soup kitchens and evangelize our neighborhoods. We see hatred and violence all around us. People's families break down; they lose their jobs. Our society is frantic for nonviolent alternatives to the conflicts that abound. Mennonites have contributed significantly to the development of conflict mediation skills. We've discovered that trying to transform conflict often involves working with the courts and even with the police, relationships Mennonites have traditionally shunned. Before we know it, we're entangled with the force of law and protection that comes from the barrel of a gun. On the one hand, we ask ourselves if we're no longer willing to "suffer wrong nonresistantly," as the baptismal question asks us to do. On the other hand, we wonder if it's irresponsible to let others do the dirty work, whether it's with the court system or in the Army.

In the midst of our handwringing about the hard gift of peace, Christians from nonpacifist churches around the world are turning to pacifist denominations and to their understanding of Jesus' way of forgiveness and reconciliation. The willingness of churches that have long claimed that war could be just to re-examine Jesus' teaching and the practice of the early church is an inspiring story we know little about.

The 20th century is the most violent one in recorded history. In World War I the British slaughtered the Germans, who slaughtered the French. The madness of national arrogance snuffed out 7.5 million people. Churches in each country blessed the butchery; each of them claimed that God was on its side. After the madness subsided, Christians in all the countries who had made war on each other asked themselves how they could have put loyalty to the nation in which they lived before their loyalty to the body of Christ. Then came World War II and (almost) everyone blessed the butchery again.

After the war, Protestant denominations from around the globe formed the World Council of Churches to seek reconciliation and unity of the body of Christ beyond confessional and national boundaries. The WCC dared to ask two hard questions: "Can war be the will of God? Can Christians kill?" The disagreements among its members on these questions were so fierce that they remained unanswered.

But for two reasons the questions would not go away. First, theologians from nonpacifist

Seekers of God who had pored over the Scriptures and asked for a new presence of the Spirit, like the Anabaptists, received a vision of the kingdom and an experience of forgiveness in which hatred and warfare were overcome.

churches for whom warmaking had become intolerable began meeting with theologians from the Historic Peace Churches (Quakers, Brethren and Mennonites) and the Fellowship of Reconciliation (an international religious pacifist organization). Second, the genie was out of the bottle: The atomic bomb had been invented and could not be uninvented. When people remembered the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki by the United States, they realized that a full-scale atomic war could render the earth uninhabitable. Finding the way to peace was more urgent than ever.

Threats of war: At a number of international conferences the peace thinkers from both traditions grappled with the problems of war and peace, revenge and reconciliation. Other organizations, such as the Christian Peace Conference, came into being for more practical reasons: They persuaded Christians from East- and West-bloc countries to join hands in protesting their countries' threats of war against each other. At the same time, peace fellowships of committed pacifists emerged in

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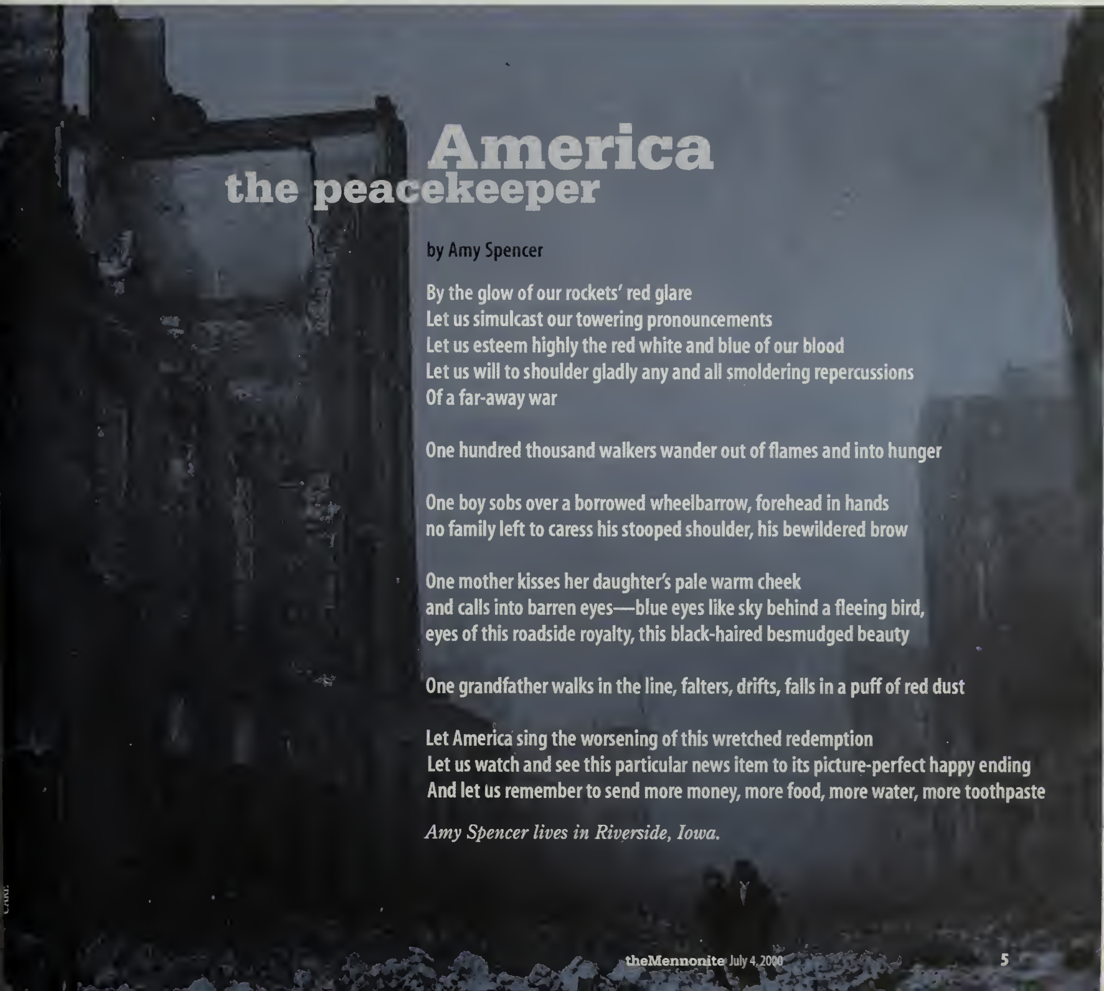

America the peacekeeper

by Amy Spencer

By the glow of our rockets' red glare
Let us simulcast our towering pronouncements
Let us esteem highly the red white and blue of our blood
Let us will to shoulder gladly any and all smoldering repercussions
Of a far-away war

One hundred thousand walkers wander out of flames and into hunger

One boy sobs over a borrowed wheelbarrow, forehead in hands
no family left to caress his stooped shoulder, his bewildered brow

One mother kisses her daughter's pale warm cheek
and calls into barren eyes—blue eyes like sky behind a fleeing bird,
eyes of this roadside royalty, this black-haired besmudged beauty

One grandfather walks in the line, falters, drifts, falls in a puff of red dust

Let America sing the worsening of this wretched redemption
Let us watch and see this particular news item to its picture-perfect happy ending
And let us remember to send more money, more food, more water, more toothpaste

Amy Spencer lives in Riverside, Iowa.

Jesus, the Lamb
continued from page 5

many nonpacifist denominations, from Baptist to Orthodox. Pope John XXIII published the encyclical *Peace on Earth*, in which he condemned modern warfare and urged Christians to be peacemakers. Martin Luther King Jr. took nonviolence to the streets and overcame evil with good.

The Holy Spirit was unmistakably at work, inspiring novel ways of thinking and acting around the world. Christians whose traditions had always taught that the church was society's chaplain and had to stand behind everything their country did began to understand the church as the universal body of Christ that could not be divided by the wars of nations. They started to see the New Testament in another perspective: Jesus did not avenge himself when he was abused by his enemies; he forgave the people who crucified him. In fact, he died for them. The church, according to Ephesians, is a new humanity, a place where strangers, antagonists and enemies are made one.

In the late 1980s the Faith and Order Commission of the National Council of Churches in the United States called for high-level consultations between representatives of all nonpacifist denominations and the Historic Peace Churches. For centuries those who took Jesus' peace teaching literally had been accused of being unrealistic and irresponsible. Now our former accusers were asking us to talk to them about our convictions. The goal of these gatherings was twofold. First was a deepening of the conviction that the message of Jesus and his work on the cross had brought peace into the world and made it possible to choose forgiveness over revenge. Here there was inspiring agreement. Second was an exploration of current denominational thinking on peace to see to what extent pacifists and nonpacifists were coming closer to each other.

The good news is that Jesus has overcome fate: We are not doomed to extract an eye for an eye from one another. Are we as Mennonites so persuaded of this truth that everyone can see it in how we live?

Representatives of two sets of American-born denominations reported (to the astonishment of many) that a pacifist understanding of Jesus' teaching had originally been part of their vision of a restored church. The Disciples of Christ, Churches of Christ and similar groups emerged from an early 19th-century revival that sought to restore the church to what it had been in the generation after Jesus' resurrection. Reading their way back into the life of the apostolic church convinced the revivalists that a spirit of peace, which expressed itself in the refusal to take up arms, was part of the sanctified life. A century later a new movement of the Spirit led people into ecstatic experience, including speaking in tongues. For many Pentecostals, black and white, life in the Spirit meant a life of nonresistance to evil. During World War I, leaders of the Assemblies of God even issued political protests against the bloodthirstiness of politicians and especially of arms manufacturers, who profited the most from war.

A new presence of the Spirit: Pacifists have been told so often across the centuries that we were irresponsible and unrealistic that we've lost confidence in the gospel possibility of responding to violence without more violence. We have more company in our conviction than we're aware of. Seekers of God who had pored over the Scriptures and asked for a new presence of the Spirit, like the Anabaptists, received a vision of the kingdom and an experience of forgiveness in which hatred and warfare were overcome.

Now people from these once pacifist churches as well as from older denominations want to rekindle the vision of peace. Many agree that in the age of modern weaponry there can be no such thing as a just war. For example, according to the just war theory, civilians must remain immune from attack. We know that both atomic and conventional warfare today kills primarily civilians. In fact, some of the churches represented at the consultations, such as the Roman Catholic and Episcopal, declared—in this spirit—that the Gulf War was not a just war. These declarations did not mean that a score of denominations had suddenly become pacifist. But there is in them a unique openness to the possibility of nonviolence as a way of life for the whole church.

This is the case not only in the United States but around the world. The World Council of Churches has seen the inseparability of peace and the unity of the church: Only where churches are reconciled with one another across national boundaries is the body of Christ one. "Justice, Peace and Creation" is one of four units through which the WCC car-

From *Hymnal: A Worship Book*

ries out its work. It was created so that churches could rediscover the message of peace in the New Testament and practice it in settings where violence is rampant.

Peace to the City: Four years ago Justice, Peace and Creation started the Programme to Overcome Violence. One of its first undertakings was to create Peace to the City, a network of already existing peace initiatives in seven cities around the globe. They were chosen as models to instruct and inspire others and one another. In Durban, South Africa, young people who were both oppressed and taught to hate are learning to settle bitter conflicts through negotiation. In Belfast, Northern Ireland, Catholics and Protestants are rereading the Bible together and summoning the courage to stand up to those who know nothing but hatred and revenge.

People in these initiatives have put their money where their mouth is, literally standing between antagonists who are convinced that the only way to overcome unbearable hurts is to get even. The intention of Peace to the City is for existing projects to spread and create communities of just peace amid violence.

The unspeakable horror of modern warfare and the desperate conflicts in our towns and cities have made people see the futility of violence. Whoever takes the sword is likely to perish by it. The good news is that Jesus has overcome fate: We are not doomed to extract an eye for an eye from one another. Are we as Mennonites so persuaded of this truth that everyone can see it in how we live? See it when we work through hard issues in congregations, when we respond to people in other countries our government calls enemies, when we first introduce people to Christ through evangelism?

The stakes are high. Churches to whom nonviolence has never made sense are watching us. Churches that once had a vision of peace are wondering if we still have it. Do you promise, by God's grace, to follow Jesus, the Lamb?

John Rempel is the Mennonite Central Committee liaison to the United Nations in New York City and former minister of Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship. Information on the Programme to Overcome Violence is available from Sarah Speicher, Box 2100, 1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland, <salawcc@coe.org>.

Why Orville & Wilbur built an airplane

by John Jenkinson

Life, as we all know, is a bicycle
with no kickstand: pedal
along for a while,

then lay it down. Some
of us glide serenely down
a long, easy hill on three-

pound Italian racers, scarcely
using any of their twenty-two
well-lubricated gears. Others

of us dismount to walk
our leaden Western Flyers up
that hot, steep slope, mugged

by our corduroys under a midsummer
sun, light from the heavy chrome
fenders kissing our eyes closed,

the bright air that clogs our passage
thickening with effort—our
wire baskets filling with rocks.

Religious News Service

John Jenkinson lives in Wichita, Kan. A version of this poem appeared in Georgia Review.

New merged conference comes with joy

Iowa-Nebraska, Northern District form Central Plains

FREEMAN, S.D.—With only one dissenting vote, the delegates of Iowa-Nebraska and Northern District conferences have taken a giant step of transformation, creating the third merged area conference in the United States and the first since integration was approved five years ago.

The new conference, called Central Plains, is composed of nearly 9,000 members in more than 60 congregations from Montana to Illinois. Iowa-Nebraska was a Mennonite Church (MC) area conference; Northern District was part of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC).

Meeting jointly June 22-25 in Freeman, Iowa-Nebraska adopted the new conference's bylaws by a 99 percent vote, while Northern District's support was unanimous.

That set the stage for the two former delegate bodies to take their first united action. Previous motions had required seconds from both Iowa-Nebraska and Northern District. But following the approval of the bylaws, Central Plains co-moderator Marlin Kym told the gathering in preparation for a vote on transitional guidelines, "Having become one body in Christ, I ask for one second."

He received the second, and the delegates approved the guidelines without opposition.

The weekend's theme, "Come With Joy," seemed appropriate as merger-related business was devoid of the contentiousness that has marked other aspects of the GC-MC transformation process. Iowa-Nebraska's and Northern District's actions concluded a five-year process, one marked by trust both in God and in each other, said participants.

"That's God's leading; there isn't any question in my mind," said Steve Ratzlaff, chair of the integration implementation committee. "Both of these groups were ready for this to happen and felt that is what God wanted to happen."

Ratzlaff, pastor of First Mennonite Church in Lincoln, Neb., had previously been pastor of Seattle Mennonite Church, where he had been involved in the development of the first two integrated area conferences in the United States. In 1994, the GC Pacific District Conference and the MC Pacific Coast and Southwest conferences realigned into Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest conferences.

No other area conferences have integrated since the approval of the GC-MC merger in 1995, although at least seven other conferences are considering such plans.

Central Plains is more than the sum of its predecessor conferences. During the Freeman assembly, the new conference accepted into membership the five active Central District congregations in Iowa: Cedar Falls Mennonite Church, Eicher Emmanuel Mennonite Church of Wayland, Pulaski Mennonite Church, Wayland Mennonite Church and Zion Mennonite Church of Donnellson.

One Northern District congregation, Bethlehem Mennonite Church of Bloomfield, Mont., shifted its membership to the MC-affiliated North Central Conference. North Central, which has three other Montana congregations, had been part of the regional integration discussions and is in communication with other area GC congregations.

Several membership-related issues remain unresolved and will require attention in the conference's first year, including the long-term status of Faith Mennonite Church in Minneapolis. The congregation, which was a member of both conferences, comes into Central Plains without voting privileges as a result of disciplinary action taken last year by Iowa-Nebraska because of its position on homosexuality. Faith had remained a member in good standing in Northern District.

The Central Plains bylaws include provisions for discipline of congregations but do not address the membership status of incoming congregations that have been disciplined. The latter is covered by the transitional guidelines, which are in effect for only one year.

The transitional guidelines also call for all Iowa-Nebraska and Northern District officers to continue their responsibilities as joint positions. Northern District's vice president, Glenn Geissinger, is a member of Faith. While neither the guidelines nor the bylaws address conference officers from disciplined congregations, Geissinger will shift from Central Plains co-assistant moderator to one of four at-large positions on the Conference Council.

Northern District, with 33 congregations and 4,200 members, was formed in 1891. Iowa-Nebraska, with 34 congregations and 4,100 members, was formed in 1920.—*Rich Preheim*

Offending church pulls back activities

Calgary Mennonite Church, in the middle of a Mennonite Church Canada firestorm over membership, has stepped back from its involvement in the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta.

The conference had been in a stalemate over what to do about Calgary, which accepts noncelibate homosexuals as members. Earlier discipline measures had failed delegate votes, and several congregations had subsequently withdrawn. Mennonite Church Canada had been drawn into the situation to find a solution.

In a letter to the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, Calgary said it is "withdrawing from participation" in the conference for five years in order to free the conference from its membership struggles. The letter also expressed a desire for continuing its connections with camp and youth programs and other Mennonite organizations.

During that time, the conference will embark on a major restructuring to develop more adequate systems of accountability and discipline.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Four area conferences gather to discuss plans for creating integrated Great Lakes Conference

GOSHEN, Ind.—The first-ever joint gathering of the Central District, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences might have provided a glimpse of the future—on earth and beyond. More than 1,000 people from the four conferences registered for the event, called Gathering 2000, held June 22-24 on the Goshen College campus.

"One cannot help but pick up the excitement and energy of this meeting," said James Waltner, Indiana-Michigan moderator. "After the roll call to identify the various conferences, the group sang 'Come We That Love the Lord' with such vigor I almost felt I was standing at heaven's gate."

Celestial experiences not withstanding, Gathering 2000 was prompted by a plan to merge the four conferences into one body, to be called Great Lakes Conference. The proposal was the meeting's dominant agenda item.

The plan calls for bringing together the four conferences into one, then dividing it into nine mission districts of 15 to 40 congregations each. Each one would be served by a district minister and a youth minister.

Great Lakes would have some 250 congregations and 33,000 members from Pennsylvania to Illinois and and from Michigan's Upper Peninsula to Tennessee.

Meeting in joint sessions, delegates spent time in three-person groups to discuss and respond to the proposal. Comments will be considered by the integration implementation committee before drafting a final version for delegate action next year.

"People care what's happening," said Ohio moderator Ross Miller. "It's really too early to tell the outcome, but people are getting more excited. … We still need to have Jesus Christ walk beside us and listen to what he has to say."

Celia Lehman

Gail Heusinkveld of Wakarusa, Ind., adds a stitch to a quilt during Gathering 2000, the first joint meeting of Central District, Indiana-Michigan, Illinois and Ohio conferences, held June 22-24 on the Goshen (Ind.) College campus. The quilt, symbolizing the proposed integration of the four conferences, will be sold at next year's Mennonite Central Committee relief sale in Goshen.

In addition to considering the specifics of the proposal, Central District moderator Janeen Bertsche Johnson said Gathering 2000 helped introduce members of the four conferences to each other. "There is a relaxed atmosphere, with people really having a good time learning to know one another," she said. *—Celia Lehman*

Folk music subject of weekend festival

A July 7-9 music festival wants to try to determine what is Mennonite about folk music.

Mennofolk, to be held in Bluffton, Ohio, will feature a variety of musical styles, including Appalachian, blues, Celtic, folk-rock and jazz.

"We want to nurture and encourage folk music among Mennonites across the Midwest by simply providing a place to play and a crowd to listen," says organizer Wendy Chappell-Dick. "We also want to see if there are threads from our common faith and heritage that connect us and our music."

The weekend event is sponsored by the Peace, Service and Justice Committee of Central District Conference.

In addition to musical performances, Mennofolk will include workshops, worship and children's activities.

Puerto Ricans look to needs on Vieques

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—As the U.S. Navy resumes bombing practice on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques, local Mennonites want to respond to the needs of Vieques' residents.

The Navy went ahead with the bombing despite appeals from Puerto Rican officials and protesters who had occupied Vieques for more than a year before being removed by federal agents in May.

"We know some other groups are there from the outside, but they don't seem to be taking the heart of the Vieques people [into account]," says Puerto Rico Conference president Ramon Bermudez. "We are interested in working with the people of Vieques and determining what the island's residents need and want to do."

Lynn Roth, director of Mennonite Central Committee's East Coast regional office, and Dionicio Acosta, an MCC East Coast program administrator, were in Puerto Rico last month, meeting with church leaders.

"Although they disagree with the U.S. Navy presence on the island, their concern is how to respond as a peace church to those affected by the bombing," Roth says. "MCC hopes to walk with the Puerto Rico Mennonites however they decide to respond."

Island residents claim high cancer rates, environmental damage and a lack of tourism as a result the Navy's bombing practice. The National Council of Churches and the National Resources Defense Council are filing suit in federal court, calling the Navy to task for environmental and human rights claims stemming from the bombings.*—John M. Spidalieri of MCC News Service*

Independence divisions being felt through Indonesian church

WEST PAPUA, Indonesia—The intensifying push for independence in the Indonesian province of West Papua is not just a political problem, local Mennonite leaders are discovering. The schisms between pro- and anti-independence factions are also making themselves manifest in the church.

The GKI Synod, one of three Indonesian Mennonite conferences, called three May regional meetings of all its 460 pastors to address the divisions. Lacking experience in handling such meetings, the synod asked Mennonite Central Committee worker Duane Ruth-Heffelbower and a team from Duta Wacana Christian University to help. Ruth-Heffelbower works in conflict transformation at the university's peace center. The team spent most of May in West Papua, giving training in conflict communication and facilitating discussions.

"The pastors arrived confused and upset," Ruth-Heffelbower says. "And those who invited us were so tense they weren't sleeping."

Disagreements within the society about independence are mirrored by disagreements within the church.

—Duane Ruth-Heffelbower

West Papua, then known as Irian Jaya, declared independence from the Netherlands in 1961 but was placed under Indonesian rule in 1963 through a murky international process. Native Melanesian Papuans are some of the poorest people in the country and have little access to the region's wealth. The province is home to vast amounts of natural resources, mostly foreign-controlled, including the world's largest gold mine, run by the U.S. firm Freeport McMoRan.

MCC photo by Duane Ruth-Heffelbower

Leaders of Indonesia's GKI Mennonite Synod take part in a May seminar on conflict communication, led by Mennonite Central Committee peace worker Duane Ruth-Heffelbower. The independence movement in the province of West Papua has created divisions within the church.

A congress of local activists and tribal leaders gathered in late May in the provincial capital of Jayapura to formally declare independence. Indonesian president Abdurrahman Wahid has agreed to change the name of Irian Jaya to the locally preferred West Papua but has ruled out independence.

"Disagreements within the society about independence are mirrored by disagreements within the church," Ruth-Heffelbower says.

The sessions led by his team focused on addressing the needs that underlie aspirations for independence. "By working together in this way, [participants] developed a number of plans for working at meeting people's needs without reference to the political process," Ruth-Heffelbower says.

Copies of all possible plans were distributed to each pastor, and a synod committee is working on follow-up.

"The meetings left the pastors better able to work together at building up the church in these difficult times," Ruth-Heffelbower says. "Many people said to us, and the team felt it too, that the Holy Spirit was able to use our time together in a very powerful way."

GKI has asked the team to return to provide intensive training for facilitators from each of the 34 regional groupings of the synod.*—Maria Linder of MCC News Service*

MMA

Stewardship discussion

A group of Sicilian Mennonite pastors discusses personal financial plans during a stewardship training led by Lorie and Mark Vincent, staff members of the Giving Project, and sponsored by Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions. Thirty pastors and their spouses attended the training, part of a two-year leadership development program for pastors to take over church plants that grew out of mission work in Italy by VMBM.

Mutual fund gets top rating for investments

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mennonite Mutual Aid's (MMA) Praxis International Fund has become the first international socially responsible mutual fund to receive Morningstar's four-star rating, the industry's top classification.

Morningstar is the leading evaluator of mutual funds and investments. Ratings are based on return on investment over three years or more.

"Investors don't have to sacrifice earnings if they want to be good stewards of their financial resources," says Praxis president John L. Liechty. "This rating for MMA Praxis demonstrates that fact."

The fund avoids industries in gambling, alcohol, tobacco and military manufacturing and supports community development investments. As of May 31, it had more than 6,500 shareholders and $62.9 million in assets. There are 26,000 shareholders and $296.4 million in assets in all funds in the Praxis family.—*MMA News Service*

Koreans planning introductory book

NEWTON, Kan.—Korean Anabaptist leaders are preparing to launch a major written resource to help others understand who they are. The book will contain the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and articles about the confession, Anabaptist history, Anabaptist ecclesiology and relations between North American Mennonites and Koreans. Most articles were written by Korean Anabaptist leaders.

About 200 copies are scheduled to be printed later this summer, then distributed for feedback for further fine-tuning, says Tim Froese, who is serving in South Korea with the Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Central Committee.

The book would be the first publication of the Anabaptist Research Institute, an education and resource center that is at the center of Froese's work.—*GCMC, MBM and MCC News Services*

MBM joins call for debt relief for Nepal

KATHMANDU, Nepal—Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and 31 other organizations working in Nepal are calling for relief of the debt that is shackling the country.

At its annual meeting in May in Kathmandu, the United Mission to Nepal (UMN) board of directors issued a statement asking governments to add Nepal to the list of countries to receive debt relief. The country's external debt has reportedly increased by nearly 20 percent annually to more than $2.3 billion, which is 430 percent of its yearly income.

"A large debt limits the government's ability to do more educational, medical and human development work, as well as hindering the nation's hydroelectric and other large-scale development efforts," says UMN executive committee member John F. Lapp, western Asia and Middle East director for the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions.

UMN is an international affiliation of 32 nongovernmental organizations working in Nepal in education, health, engineering and development.—*MBM News Service*

MCC celebrates 40 years of work in Bolivia

SANTA CRUZ—More than 500 visitors attended the Mennonite Central Committee Bolivia 40th anniversary June 16. The event, held at the MCC center in Santa Cruz, included presentations of current MCC programs and a commemoration service.

MCC Bolivia's accountant, Tito Castro of Santa Cruz, was recognized for 20 years of service with the organization.

MCC Bolivia has more than 65 workers from 10 countries, more than half of them from Bolivia. MCC programs include working with colony Mennonites, education, income generation, street children, dry latrines, appropriate technology and agriculture.—*MCC News Service*

by the way ...

U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church Sunday school attendance in 1998 for children 13 and younger was 18,000, an average of 16 children per congregation.
—Mennonite Directory 2000

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Workers

Brubaker, Charmayne Denlinger, Lancaster, Pa., has begun as director of human resources for Mennonite Central Committee, Akron, Pa. She was formerly MCC's director of communications.

McFadden, Dwight, New Holland, Pa., has begun as marketing director for Ten Thousand Villages, Akron, Pa. He was formerly MCC's director of human resources.

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Births

Clark, Tarynn Hannah, May 27, to Karmen (Rigsecker) and Timothy Clark, Middlebury, Ind.

Endres, Rhett Joseph, May 18, to Amy (Epp) and Steve Endres, South Haven, Kan.

Gabel, Jacob Nikolas, May 5, to Brad Barry and Kathy (Vander Werff) Gabel, Pasadena, Calif.

Harsha, Alexandra Renee, May 12, to Kathryn (Lehman) and Tom Harsha, Lyndhurst, Ohio.

Hatter, Zachary Steven, May 24, to Chad and Lori (Smith) Hatter, Waynesboro, Va.

Kehr, Landon Lewis, June 12, to Jerry and Monica (Leaman) Kehr, Wakarusa, Ind.

Litwiller, Ivy Mae, May 13, to Joshua and Lisa Litwiller, Hesston, Kan.

Martin, Connor Patrick, May 4, to Cheryl (Ebersole) and Royce Martin, Chambersburg, Pa.

Miller, Hunter Devon, June 5, to Heath and Jennifer (Weaver) Miller, Silver Lake, Ind.

Polizzotto, Diane Yoder, June 8, to Greg and Rhonda (Yoder) Polizzotto, Littleton, Colo.

Ross, Abigal Dawn, May 25, to Dawn (Hostetler) and Michael Ross, Dalton, Ohio.

Rohrer, Hunter Devin, May 30, to Dwight and Jennifer Rohrer, Lititz, Pa.

Sawin, Cora Isabel Metzler, May 13, to Erika and Mark Metzler Sawin, Austin, Texas.

Siebert, Delaney Dolores, June 10, to Amber (Luth) and Jason Siebert, Henderson, Neb.

Westover, Drew Michael, May 24, to Andrew and Crystal (King) Westover, Burnham, Pa.

Yoder-Tiedt, Emily Zhi, Aug. 9, 1999, received for adoption May 15, by Marla and Timothy Yoder-Tiedt, Columbus, Ohio.

Marriages

Beachey/Christner: Carissa Beachey , Goshen, Ind., and Jay Christner, Goshen, April 29 at San Antonio Mennonite Church.

Birky/Gonzales: Michelle Dawn Birky, Foosland, Ill., and Christopher Matthew Gonzales, Kokomo, Ind., June 10 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Briceno/Peachey: Natacha Briceno, Belleville, Pa., and Dion Peachey, Harrisonburg, Va., May 20 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Chupp/Pittman: Ryan Chupp, Wayland, Iowa, and Christine Pittman, Nappanee, Ind., May 12 at Nappanee Missionary Church.

Daniels/Nussbaum: Mark Daniels, Elida, Ohio, and Krista Nussbaum, Orrville, Ohio, June 10 at Chestnut Ridge Mennonite Church, Orrville.

Everest/Zook: Paul Everest, Dallas, and Darlene Zook, Dallas, June 10 at Northwest Bible Church, Dallas.

Houck/Weaver: Richard Houck, New Holland, Pa., and Jill Weaver, Lititz, Pa., May 20 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Hurst/Straub: Tia Hurst, Akron, Pa., and Michael Straub, Leola, Pa., May 13 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola.

Maurer/Rode: David Maurer, Marion, Ohio, and Beth Rode, Toledo, Ohio, May 27 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

Miller/Ropp: Nate Miller, Wellman, Iowa, and Stacy Ropp, Kalona, Iowa, June 10 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Mumau/Scheetz: Michael Mumau, Greensburg, Pa., and Kristen Scheetz, Harleysville, Pa., June 10 at Harleysville.

Thiessen/Wagner: Bruce Thiessen, Akron, Pa., and Lyndell Wagner, Akron, May 28 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Troyer/Yoder: Jewel Troyer, Mancelona, Mich., and Benjamin Yoder, Wakarusa, Ind., May 27 at Mancelona.

Deaths

Biddier, Rose Marie Amstutz, 60, Hyattsville, Md., died May 29. Spouse: Winfried Biddier. Parents: Ira and Delphine Amstutz (deceased). Other survivors: children Kwami, Akosia, Joel. Funeral: June 10 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Bigler, Catherine, 77, Wooster, Ohio, died May 30. Parents: Glenn and Mary Helen Ault Hider (deceased). Survivors: daughter Gwen Kilmer; three grandchildren. Funeral: June 3 at Wooster.

Brandt, Avis Unruh, 84, Inman, Kan., died May 23. Spouse: Waldo Brandt (deceased). Parents: Harry and Lena Schultz Unruh (deceased). Survivors: children Darcy, Flauretta Dalke, Sharon Oswald; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Memorial service: May 27 at Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Gellert, Erich, 90, Bluffton, Ohio, died June 10. Spouse: Alice Wiche Gellert. Parents: Herman and Augusta Voigt Gellert (deceased). Other survivors: children Klaus, Ulrike Doris Farley, Erika; five grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Gongwer, Ruby, 73, Foraker, Ind., died June 9 from an extended illness. Spouse: Ivan Gongwer. Parents: Fred and Lizzy (Reber) Kauffman (deceased). Other survivors: children Deb Bode, Ann Spratt; five grandchildren. Funeral: June 12 at Holdeman Mennonite Church, Wakarusa, Ind.

Heidebrecht, Ernest, 86, Inman, Kan., died June 9. Spouse: Marie Heidebrecht. Parents: Henry and Katherine Thiessen Heidebrecht (deceased). Other survivors: children LeRoy, Lois Schrag, Rachel Montague; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 12 at Hoffnungsau Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Koontz, Esther Ruth Schroeder, 79, North Newton, Kan., died May 18. Spouse: Elbert Koontz (deceased). Parents: Peter and Susie Nickel Schroeder (deceased). Survivors: children Theodore, Philip, Richard; five grandchildren. Memorial service: May 22 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Mininger, Jonas, 80, Susquehanna, Pa., died May 18. Spouse: Emma Good Mininger. Parents: John Hackman and Martha Landis Mininger (deceased). Other survivors: children Lois Frantz, Mark, David, Grace Chace, Richard, Kenneth; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: May 20 at Lakeview Mennonite Church, Susquehanna.

Mullet, Mildred Heistand, 77, Goshen, Ind., died June 5. Spouse: Frank J. Mullet. Parents: Walter and Stella May Stern Heistand (deceased). Other survivors: stepchildren Betty Ann Mullet, Phyllis Shriner, Lela Rohrer, Sanford, John, Philip, Ronald; 12 stepgrandchildren; 12 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: June 8 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Richert, Roland von Steen, 86, Globe, Ariz., died June 7. Spouse: Edna M. Tuttle Richert (deceased). Parents: David and Edith von Steen Richert (deceased). Funeral: June 17 at Globe, Ariz.

Roth, Berdella Miller, 61, Woodburn, Ore., died June 11 from cancer. Spouse: Donovan Roth. Parents: Harry (deceased) and Dorothy Miller. Other survivors: children Lanette Willig, Sheryl Mast, Karlene MacGregor, Jerry; nine grandchildren. Memorial service: June 14 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Rush, Loretta Fleming van Blake, 76, Cleveland, died May 21. Spouse Thomas Rush (deceased). Parents: Henry and Harriet van Blake (deceased). Survivors: children Loretta Mitchell, Laverne Cummings, Maxey Otuteye, Richard; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 27 at Lee Heights Community Church, Cleveland.

Shantz, Roy, 76, Elkhart, Ind., died May 24. Spouse: Bertha Bixler Shantz. Parents: John and Minnie Shantz (deceased). Other survivors: children Caralee Smith, Peg Owen, Mike, Rob; three grandchildren. Funeral: May 27 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Warkentin, Gary, 64, Newton, Kan., died May 19 from a heart attack. Spouse: Letha Krehbiel Warkentin. Parents: Otto and Lena Kessler Warkentin (deceased). Other survivors: children Cheryl, Debra Hindman; two grandchildren. Memorial service May 23 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Wiens, Wilbur, 69, Inman, Kan., died April 18 from double pneumonia and sepsis. Spouse: Jane Gaeddert Wiens. Parents: Edward and Martha Androes Wiens. Other survivors: children Kevin, Melody Bontrager; four grandchildren. Funeral: April 20 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

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classifieds

- **Lancaster Mennonite High School** has the following openings: ***girls health and physical education teacher, coaches, part-time Spanish and French teacher*** and ***director of development.*** Contact Richard Thomas at 717-299-0436; email <thomasjr@lmhs.com>.

- **Locust Grove Mennonite School** is hosting a ***country auction and chicken barbecue July 14-15,*** including Children's Fun Festival. Held at 2257 Old Philadelphia Pike (Route 340), four miles east of Lancaster. For more information, call 717-394-7107.

- **Providence Mennonite Church,** Newport News, Va., is hosting a ***centennial celebration, Oct. 7-8, 2000.*** Request registration forms before Sept. 1 from Providence Centennial Committee, 13101 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, VA 23602; 757-249-2702; fax 757-881-9709; email <pmcnn@aol.com>.

- **Needed: *Administrator for Oregon Mennonite Residential Services,*** located in Salem, Ore. Creative planner and organization builder with a strong sense of mission to work with people experiencing developmental disabilities. Program has 6 group homes, 60 employees and serves 30 clients. Must have 3-5 years of management-level experience in social services or health care (preferably faith-based) and an undergraduate degree.

  Send resume by July 24 to Tim Stair, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St., Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; email <timstair@compuserve.com>.

- **Goshen College** invites applications for a tenure track appointment in ***Bible and religion*** beginning July 2001. Qualifications: Ph.D. in biblical studies with a concentration in Hebrew Bible (ABD considered); secondary competence in religious studies or theology required. Responsibilities: teach eight undergraduate courses, including biblical literature (multiple sections), upper division courses in area of specialization and other courses within interdisciplinary general education program of a liberal arts college. The successful candidate must be willing to accept Goshen College's mission statement and standards and affirm Anabaptist perspectives. Women and people from under-represented groups are especially encouraged to apply. Goshen College is an affirmative action employer.

  Send letter addressing qualifications, curriculum vitae, undergraduate/graduate transcripts and three current letters of reference to John Yordy, Provost, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7501; fax 219-535-7060; email <provost@goshen.edu>. Deadline for application is Aug. 31, 2000.

- **Western Mennonite School** is seeking qualified faculty and staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered educational setting. Summer 2000: ***Assistant principal:*** part-time position; responsibilities include supervision of instruction and curriculum for expanding middle school and high school programs. May be combined with teaching duties for full-time position. ***Facilities manager:*** full-time position; management and supervisory experience necessary to lead a team that maintains and cares for facilities, plant and grounds. The campus includes 6 buildings with multiple parking lots, driveways and 40 acres of forested property. Fall 2000: ***Spanish instructor:*** levels I, II and III; may also include ESL instruction. ***Assistant girls resident director:*** full-time voluntary service position; focus on team-oriented youth ministry. Responsibilities include counseling and assisting in coordination of activities. Housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided.

  Western (grades 6-12) is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley in the Northwest. For information, contact Eric Martin, Principal, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000; email <Martines@teleport.com>.

- **Valleyview Mennonite Church,** London, Ont., invites applications for a full-time ***pastor*** beginning Jan. 1, 2001. We are an urban congregation with an average attendance of 100 and growing. The pastor will serve as a spiritual mentor, emphasize preaching, lead in worship, provide visitation and work with youth and young adults.

  Please direct inquiries to Lester Kehl, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, 4489 King St. E., Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2.

- **Mennonite Publishing House** seeks ***office clerk,*** order entry/accounting department. Full-time 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Possibly later hours. Primary responsibilities: providing good customer service, taking and entering orders, promoting additional products, following up on customer problems. One-year assignment or longer. Submit resume to MPH, HR Office, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683.

- **Goshen College** seeks ***director of student activities and summer programs:*** a full-time administrative position beginning Aug. 1, 2000. Provide leadership for coordinating student activities including budgeting, administration of facilities and equipment. Work with Campus Activities Council to plan events. Frequent evening and weekend work. Summer program administration involves leadership for planning and implementing summer events on campus, working with off-campus groups including marketing and arranging events, and supervising students and staff. Master's degree required, preferably in physical education, athletic administration, recreation or similar fields. Ability to relate well to students, faculty and staff and external customers essential. Must be well-organized, flexible, self-motivated person. Expected to express commitment to a life of discipleship following Jesus Christ and to the church.

  To apply, send letter of application and resume, including three references, to David Janzen, Director of Human Resources, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-535-7060; or attach to email <davidpj@goshen.edu>. Also complete Personnel Information Form at <www.goshen.edu/employment/personl.html>. Goshen College is an AA/EEO employer; women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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Make prayer and evangelism a priority in the new Mennonite Church

by Marlin Birkey

The vision for our new Mennonite Church needs to be in line with, or at least begin with, the call sounded by Paul in 1 Timothy 2.

The power of this chapter to shape a vision for the church has largely been lost in discussions and debates over the intent and meaning of verses 8-15 regarding the respective roles of men and women in public worship. A fresh look at this chapter as a whole unit, without imposing a public worship interpretive structure on it, should allow us to hear Paul's reminder of the top priority for the church.

"First of all," Paul writes, "I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings be made on behalf of all people. ... This [praying] is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." The phrase "first of all" does not refer to the first of a list of equal things. It refers to priority. It means first as a matter of primary importance. In other words, the first word for the church, above every other word, is a call to prayer.

The context clearly shows that the focus of our praying is to be the salvation of the lost. God desires that all people be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Our praying to that end is good and acceptable to God because it joins our desire to see the lost saved with God's desire to save the lost. And if we truly believe that the prayers of righteous people have "great power and wonderful results" (James 5:16, TLB), such praying in accordance with the will of God will surely release the power of the Holy Spirit to bring the lost to salvation. Lest there be any confusion about the truth that the lost need to understand, Paul restates the gospel in 1 Timothy 2:5-6, then recalls his commission to preach and teach this gospel to the Gentiles in verse 7.

The resounding "therefore" of verse 8 refers back to verses 3 and 4. God desires all people to be saved. Therefore, Paul writes, I want the men in every place to pray for the lost, and likewise the women, paying particular attention to those things which might hinder such praying. Men are to pray with hands untainted by sin and without wrath or dissension in their relationships. Women are to make sure they are not distracted from prayer by preoccupation with external things or by power struggles with men. Everything is to be done to ensure that prayer for the lost remains unified, focused and powerful.

Alas, such passionate praying for the lost to be saved seems largely absent from our churches, probably because a concern that lost people get saved is, for the most part, absent from our churches. Mennonites involved in the Living in Faithful Evangelism process some years ago should remember the study of churches cited by Win and Charles Arn in *The Master's Plan for Making Disciples.* Their research revealed that reaching the lost for Christ is a low priority in most congregations and is a low priority for most individual Christians. Church members have few, if any, non-Christian friends, and our church activities are geared mostly to those already saved.

We seem to have forgotten that fishing for men (and women) was the primary component of Jesus' call to his disciples. Bill Hybels suggests in *Becoming a Contagious Christian* that too many churches "just go on week after week, trying to retain their numbers, meet their budgets and maintain the status quo. They have no real vision for reaching lost people and showing them the way to God because they're too busy debating internal policies and dealing with all kinds of in-house strife."

If we are concerned about the kingdom of God coming on this earth, we cannot afford to have a vision for our church not centered in a desire for the lost to come to faith in Jesus Christ.

What will be the vision of the new Mennonite Church? The plain and simple fact is that if proclamation of the gospel stopped in all sectors of our world, the church would be extinct by the end of the 21st century. If we are concerned about the kingdom of God coming on this earth, we cannot afford to have a vision for our church not centered in a desire for the lost to come to faith in Jesus Christ. Can we afford to settle for less than passionate praying, or no praying at all, to that end?

Paul said, "First of all, I urge [beg, implore, beseech] that prayers be offered for all," prayers offered specifically for the salvation of the lost. I hope the vision for our new Mennonite Church will be similarly centered in a concern for the lost and a call to fervent prayer for their salvation.

Marlin Birkey is pastor at Ashton Mennonite Church, Sarasota, Fla.

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J. Lorne Peachey

Coming to terms with our red, white and blue dilemmas

I am not a devotee of plastic. While I tolerate its utilitarian functions, when it masquerades as art or beauty—such as in at least half the flowers decorating the graves in the cemetery this past Memorial Day—I want to look for another venue for my daily walk.

So when a large plastic whirligig mysteriously appeared in our lawn early one morning, my first reaction was to throw it away. Then I saw this note: “If you elect not to keep this piece of art, please plant it in someone else’s yard.”

Okay, on whom should I continue this practical joke? But then I stopped. Maybe this wasn’t a joke. Maybe whoever put that whirligig in our lawn really liked it and meant it as a gift. And if I got rid of it …

As I was contemplating my plastic dilemma, a burst of wind caught the whirligig and sent it into a spin of color. Not bad. Given the right location, I could get used to this. I found that location on a post by the compost pile, where this piece of “art” continues to whirl away—to my reluctant delight.

This July 4, as my neighborhood plants red, white and blue flags to honor the United States’ 224th birthday, I have similar, ambivalent feelings about my country. As a Mennonite who believes strongly in the way of peace, I want to forget that my homeland had a violent beginning. As a Christian who believes Jesus would have us turn the other cheek, I cringe at the oppressive tactics my country continues to use throughout the world.

At the same time, I know that I live in one of the freest and most tranquil countries in the world. I was never more aware of this than when I visited Guatemala during the unrest there several years ago. When, on my returning to the Miami airport a U.S. customs official greeted me with “Welcome home,” I warmed all over and began to relax.

I could relax because of the freedom we have in this country. We can worship as we please. We can think, speak and write (such as this editorial), agreeing and disagreeing with our government without the fear that citizens of other countries have when they do the same.

For Christians, especially for Mennonites with our strong commitment to the way of peace, questions about citizenship are an ongoing dilemma. Can we be proud and grateful citizens of the United States without appearing to condone what goes against our beliefs? Conversely, how do we challenge the arrogance and power-grabbing of our country without appearing to be disloyal and unappreciative for the freedom that is ours?

We can begin by admitting that a dilemma exists. So many times we treat citizenship issues as caricatures: Liberals are the ones who don’t pay war taxes, conservatives the ones who don’t vote. What is more helpful is admitting that having our primary citizenship in God’s kingdom presents all of us with dilemmas that are difficult to solve, especially in relation to our earthly citizenship.

We must also become more intentional in our actions. Today our responses are mostly piecemeal: Some advocate tax resistance, some lobby Congress for a peace tax fund. Others want to become involved in the political process and put Christians into leadership. Still others believe we should use nonviolent techniques to change oppressive actions and structures. Most of us do nothing.

Mennonites may never completely agree on which is the best strategy. But supporting each other in ways we believe the Spirit is leading us to act could go a long way in coming to terms with our dilemmas.

Living in the richest, most powerful nation in the world at this time in our history presents us with special challenges. Not the least of these is our relationship with sisters and brothers in other countries, many of whom see their oppression as caused by the United States and therefore partly our responsibility. One step in acknowledging this dilemma could be to listen to the advice they are giving in how we can be better citizens of the world.

To be a disciple of Jesus Christ is to live with dilemmas. Most are much more important than plastic whirligigs (though even these should raise some environmental concerns, particularly if our first impulse is to throw them away). This July 4, we U.S. Mennonites might celebrate the founding of our country by acknowledging our ambivalent feelings about our country and being more intentional about dealing with them. As a result we could become better citizens, both of this world and the world to come.—*jlp*

Mennonite Church Canada, Mennonite Church USA: While the citizenship dilemma is not unique to Christians in the United States, there are things about our country that make it more acute. We have so many benefits, but there’s also so much we don’t agree with as Mennonites.

The difference this makes became especially apparent during merger discussions. Mennonites in Canada, for example, seem to have little difficulty affixing their country to their denominational name to make Mennonite Church Canada.

Meanwhile, at Orlando 97, U.S. delegates held long and intense discussions, first on whether the United States should somehow be tied to the name, then whether it should be Mennonite Church U.S. or Mennonite Church USA.

Some Canadians noted these discussions showed our ambivalence toward our country. Some U.S. delegates, in turn, wondered if Canadians aren’t too meshed with their country to be able to so quickly adopt the new name.

The dilemma continues.—*jlp*

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Cosmic concerns

Calvin King's article "The Cosmic Connection" (Speaking Out, June 6) disappointed me for a variety of reasons. His main point seems to be that the church is ignorantly resisting science and failing to recognize the truths that scientific discoveries have revealed to us. The tendency of some Christians to be defensive with regard to certain claims of science is, according to King, not helpful in integrating science with our biblical faith. The fact is, I don't think there is any way to arrive at truth without this process. People offer ideas, others challenge those ideas, and through this ongoing process the good ideas emerge, are tested, revised and finally in some cases enter into that area of unquestioned truth.

It could be assumed from King's article that all scientists agree on the age of the earth and the fact that life as we know it evolved gradually over a long period of time. That is not true, as I am sure King knows. *Christianity Today* had an interesting article about the current debate with regard to evolution and the challenges to evolutionary theory that are coming from some surprising sources, including scientists. The author of the article even praises the young-earth creationists for the very resistance King denounces. This resistance has served the purpose of keeping some scientists from arrogantly assuming that every idea is a good one.

A world where ideas are not challenged would be far worse than a world where we do challenge one another. Truth will emerge, and some will have to eat humble pie, but in regard to creation science, there are still more questions than answers. I don't think it is entirely fair to say that the church distrusts science. It would be fair to say that we don't think scientists are necessarily more qualified than anyone else to interpret the data they collect. To say that a star is so many light years away is one thing. To say what that means is another thing altogether. We appreciate the help we receive from science in better understanding this fascinating world we live in. As far as understanding how it got here, however, the full truth is still waiting to be discovered.—*Dennis Ernest, Lititz, Pa.*

When Calvin King asks us to teach our children that our beginnings spanned 12 billion years, how does he propose to teach Exodus 20:11? Why do we try to slow down the creative speed when God can create life immediately (Mark 5:42)? Are we willing to trade our great astonishment for our puny natural expectations? I hope not.

Gazing into nature and running the guessing game of "What's up, doc?" is exhilarating but more hazardous than heeding the Creator's careful interpretation of beginning events. It seems that God took special care in revealing to us in literal law literature that he worked on a six-day plan, tied to our Sabbath day.

How does accepting this account help us?

1. It makes us aware that we must rank our teachers and their findings according to their worthiness. We respect and honor researching scientists, but we worship Jesus. When he speaks, we listen longer because we know that he will also have the last word (Matthew 10:28).
2. Six-day speed gets complex organisms up and functioning so that the ecocycle can be completed.
3. We do not consign our ancestors to dark, cold caves for millions of years but place them with God in the beginning. God wants to be with his people, as shown in Revelation 21:3, when God finally gets things the way he wants them. So why shouldn't God start out by creating a garden for his people and walking in it with them (Genesis 3:8)?
4. Our natural explanations must bow before the power and speed of God's surprises. John Howard Yoder's memorable line was, "We go from surprise to surprise, and we are not surprised because we know that God works this way."—*Paul Gotwals Landis, Carstairs, Alta.*

No laughing matter

I was a bit taken aback when I read "Pontius' Puddle" in the June 20 issue. I am usually happy to see Pontius' face, but being a sufferer of an anxiety disorder, I found his pastor's response to his anxiety attacks to be pastoral counseling at its worst.

Like others with anxiety disorders, I do not choose to worry; the worrying happens to me. My disorder went undiagnosed until this past February, when I suffered through what are known as sustained panic attacks. During these eight days, I had diarrhea daily, I could barely eat, I was afraid I was going to die, I thought I was losing my mind, I would shake uncontrollably, my heart raced and blood pressure rose, my body acted as though it was being chased by a lion and fighting for its very survival, only there was no lion. This would go on for hours at a time. I finally ended up in the emergency room and was admitted to a local psychiatric hospital. By the time I reached the

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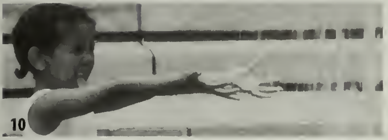
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y readers say

hospital I had lost eight pounds in eight days. During my five-day stay in the hospital, I tried to take complete responsibility for my anxiety; I had a lot of "if onlys." Anxiety disorders are not caused by the individual. It is true that individuals can do a great deal to help themselves such as with cognitive behavioral therapy and medications.

I'd like to tell Pontius to see a psychiatrist for an official diagnosis and then a cognitive behavioral therapist for additional help. These are both things his pastor should have told him to do.

Something I would like to see more of in *The Mennonite* are articles on mental illnesses by people who suffer from them. It seems this isn't the kind of thing one can stand up on Sunday morning and ask prayer and support for. The fact that I've requested my name withheld is a reflection of this.—*Name withheld by request*

What's the difference?

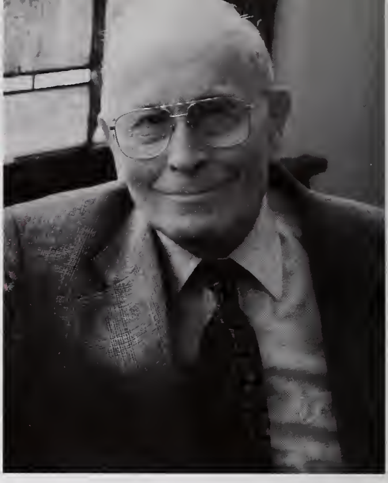
I have generally appreciated *The Mennonite* for its coverage of life and issues in the church and focus on inspiration and discipleship. But I am appalled at labeling a number of regional integration movements as "superconferences" ("Trend to 'Superconferences' Holds Ramifications for Smaller Conferences, Entire Denomination," June 20). Please find another way to describe larger conferences in the mix of area conferences in the emerging Mennonite Church USA. The label "superconference" implies a top-down, over-under dominance. It is a loaded term. We have too much of that kind of thinking in the church. Help us appreciate the gifts and resources of smallness that God calls forth to exist alongside and enrich the larger. We are called to be partner conferences who value and receive from one another rather than focusing on who is bigger and who is littler and whatever difference that might or should make.—*Art Smoker, Goshen, Ind.*

Cover photo
by Nancy Warner Lewis

The memory man

Adam Deckert finds encouragement for himself and others in memorizing poetry and sharing it.

by Ted Lewis



Nancy Warner Lewis

The harvest of memorization worth it: Adam Deckert

The first time I heard Adam Deckert recite poetry took me by surprise. We were in a men's Sunday school class, comprised mostly of retired farmers living around Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan. The topic was justice. Some were speaking of a restorative model, some of a retributive model. And then, out of the blue, Adam referred to a Shakespeare sonnet that might shed some light, and from memory he delivered all 14 lines, ending with, "And earthly power doth then show likest God's, / When mercy seasons justice."

It was as if he carried precious objects in his pockets and could pull one out at the right moment, saying with a smile, "Here, would you like to look at this?" Since then, I have heard him recite several psalms (19, 91 and 103) and several poems, mostly at church. I have come to appreciate his gift both as a reflection of who he is and as a contribution to others.

In some mysterious way, discovering a link between a poet's image and our own sensory experience allows us to transcend the difficult (as well as the mundane) parts of life. And isn't that the same power of the Incarnation?

A metal worker and farmer, now 80 years old, Adam Deckert is a Mennonite whose parents came from Russia in the mid-1870s to the Great Plains. His father was 2 years old when the original group in Pawnee Rock spent part of that first winter in a box car. From the post-World War I era of Adam's birth, a photograph reveals a long line of horses and buggies beside the Bergthal Church building.

When World War II began, Adam, with conscientious objector status, worked in three Civilian Public Service camps. During his many years of soldering metal (which left evenings and weekends for farming), he and Helen, his wife, had six children.

1984 proved to be pivotal for Adam. He and Helen joined their oldest daughter, Anna Sue, and her husband on a trip to Europe. While on a cruise down the Rhine River, Adam referred to a line in Longfellow's "The Children's Hour" about "The Bishop of Bingen in the Mouse-Tower on the Rhine." Anna Sue pursued this lead, and soon the cat was out of the bag. By the time Adam finished the entire poem, he realized his audience was greater than his family. People seated nearby had been listening.

What his daughter discovered was that Adam had been memorizing poetry since his high school days but had never delivered them to other people. His high school English teacher, Anna Staufer, may have set the pattern. She asked students to memorize portions of their readings in literature, yet they never had to present them orally. Over the years, then, Adam cultivated his love for learning poetry, sometimes using his tractor as a place to etch new poems into his mind.

The Rhine River experience exposed the mother lode of his gift. During the past 10 years, Adam has enjoyed opportunities to recite for audiences. At Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, near Divide, Colo., he has given "The Spider and the Fly" and a portion of "The Vision of Sir Launfal," which includes the line, "And what is so rare as a day in June?" On a tour bus, when travelers are invited to speak, or at family reunions, he might deliver "The Gingham Dog and the Calico Cat" or "The Deacon's Masterpiece." At Thanksgiving, after pumpkin pie, I have heard Adam roll through a half dozen poems, and it's good entertainment.

Adam knows poems are well-suited for children, and it's possible his own young-at-heart spirit owes something to the poetry residing within him. Children take to the rhythm and rhyme of poems, even if they miss the meaning. And if they hear a poem repeated over time, the words sink in, and eventually the meaning surfaces. But ultimately it's the

A Psalm of Life

Tell me not, in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream!—
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal;
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul. . . .

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act,—act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God o'erhead! . . .

Let us then be up and doing
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882)

imagery that sticks with us: "'Where's my toadstool?' loud he lamented / And that's how umbrellas first were invented."

Mental benchmarks: When asked about the enduring value of memorization, Adam spoke of how various poems serve as mental benchmarks of his own history. During a troublesome time in high school he learned "The Song of the Shirt," which portrays a woman wearied by factory labor.

Poems also mark seasons of the year. "The Daffodils," for instance, reminds Adam of that nostalgic time in early spring when brown is about to give way to green. Poems mark holidays, too. On the Sunday eve of one Memorial Day, he recited "Elegy Written in a Country Court Yard" at the Bergthal cemetery, as requested by pastor Muriel Stackley.

On the occasion of his 50th wedding anniversary, Adam gave one of his favorites, Kipling's "If." It strikes me that over the years he had grown into the wisdom of this poem, yet in a modest way he represented this wisdom for all who listened: "If you can dream—and not make your dreams your master; / If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim, / If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster / And treat those two imposters just the same / ... Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it, / And, what is more, you'll be a man, my son!"

At three different times, Adam has memorized "The Deserted Village" by Goldsmith. This is not surprising, since it takes nearly 45 minutes to wade through it. The first time was before his wife developed a sickness; the next time was after she went into a nursing home; the final time was after she died. What motivated him to digest such a large helping during a difficult period in his life? "I could really relate to parts of it," he says. The lines, "no more the smith his dusky brow shall clear / relax his ponderous strength and lean to hear," immediately trigger Adam's memory of the deaf blacksmith in Pawnee Rock who once pounded on his plowshares.

The power of poetry: "I could relate to it." That is the power of poetry in a nutshell. In some mysterious way, discovering a link between a poet's image and our own sensory experience allows us to transcend the difficult (as well as the mundane) parts of life. And isn't that the same power of the Incarnation? Now that we have "seen and heard" the image of the invisible God, we are comforted by the fact that God, through Jesus, can relate to our human experience, and we can now relate personally to God.

Memorizing poetry does not come easily. Adam testifies that it involves a lot of hard work. But the harvest is always worth it. Every time I ask a question about why he memorizes or what it does for him, he never theorizes over it. Instead, he brims over with a poem to illustrate his answer. Thus it is fitting to end with a verse from Wordsworth's "The Daffodils" to reveal the peaceful fruit of poetry that dwells richly inside Adam Deckert:

"For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils."

Ted Lewis now lives in Eugene, Ore.

Leaven through the bloodstream

In my younger days I used to memorize a lot of Scripture passages. But the practice waned over the years. Lately, inspired by Adam Deckert, I have been working on several Bible passages. I have rediscovered that the mental work of learning a text by heart is a wonderful way to leaven something throughout my bloodstream.

Even if a person does not recite poems or Scripture for groups, there is still great value in committing a text to memory. Colossians 3:16 says to "let the word of Christ dwell in you richly." That makes me think of the Incarnation. The Word who was present at creation has dwelt among us so that our senses may experience the character of God. Likewise, a poem digested within our hearts and minds gives us a close encounter with the author's experience.

These days we often speak of computers as having memory. I wonder if our admiration of this memory capacity lessens our motivation to memorize. Meanwhile, our society rewards people for remembering trivia. The new challenge seems to be whether, in the midst of greater access to information, we will have the desire to take a few gems deep within ourselves and let them enrich our lives.—*Ted Lewis*

Why I keep working at transformation

"We must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor."

by Jim Schrag

Privileged to be granted this role: Jim Schrag

Fiile photo

Mostly I am offered sympathy these days. "I would not have your job for anything," people tell me. They know my life and calling these days centers on transformation. The word itself may offer the clue that explains people's pity toward me. Transformation, and the changes it produces in us, is difficult, usually messy and often painful.

If the Mennonite church is a place of open proclamation of God's timeless truth in Christ, it is also where our habits of faithfulness are mostly unspoken, their origins embedded deep in our subconscious. The call to be transformed in Christ is no invitation to an easy passage. This is particularly so in an effort of churchwide transformation as broad as we are attempting in this generation of Mennonites.

As our current denominations have become more similar in outlook and practice, so each one has also become more diverse within. The negative side of this internal diversity is the adoption of the spirit of our age that inflates the importance of the individual. I observe that none of us is immune from this, liberal and conservative alike. This spirit also magnifies the local, which obstructs our view of the larger work of Christ in other people and in other places.

The positive side of this new variety comes though an influx of "new Mennos" who are from neither General Conference Mennonite Church nor Mennonite Church backgrounds but have arrived from somewhere else. These people often bring to the Mennonite church the refreshing cup of God's grace. They also challenge old assumptions and cherished cultural identities.

Even in an era of increased pluralism, our gift of transformation reminds us that we have not yet discarded an Anabaptist tenacity that holds out for Christ-like distinctiveness in faith and practice.

Some observers, viewing the growing variety among us, conclude this means that the old idea of denomination is on the wane. If this is true, we find ourselves swimming upstream with our brave notions of a new, "transformed" Mennonite Church. But our Anabaptist forebears did not spurn against-the-odds efforts when they faced challenges. Even in an era of increased pluralism, our gift of transformation reminds us that we have not yet discarded an Anabaptist tenacity that holds out for Christ-like distinctiveness in faith and practice.

We struggle to know how God is calling us to be make a difference "across the street and around the world," using the engaging language our mission leaders are teaching us. To struggle with such opportunity is good. We are blessed above other generations in this challenge, for God is asking us to participate in God's purpose of "making all things new" (Revelation 21:5).

If this is the meaning of the invitation to transformation among us, should we succumb to despair as we come to new terms with our growing diversity? Or can the promise of God in this opportunity light the fires of hope, generating energy for a renewed community of believers with varied gifts, complete in their variety for the work of Christ entrusted to us?

An ancient plan: The vision for which we reach is not new. The apostle Paul admonishes us not to be "conformed to this world" but rather "transformed by the renewing of [our] minds" to discern the will of God (Romans 12:2). We are part of an ancient plan, with God providing the mirror for our self-encounter. Paul, himself on a mission to build a new church, explained it this way to the Corinthians: "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known (1 Corinthians 13:12 NRSV).

Whatever form of transformation we embrace now for our generation and the next, or however we organize ourselves for witness and mission in a postmodern world, our efforts can only be partial and incomplete. The divine call is always tempered by our human limitations. But this fact should not deter us from accepting God's invitation to be transformed, not just as individuals or in our small circles of friendship, but also in expansive, even audacious ways, together as a new denomination, beating the odds. God in Christ fills the gaps of our frail efforts.

Despite our penchant for focusing on the details of our faithfulness, we have an opportunity now to keep the main thing as the main thing. This is found in the call to each Christian and congregation to be "evangels," proclaimers in word and deed of the salvation found in Christ alone. The degree to which this calling is restored among us in all its variations, such as in peace, justice, service or anti-racism, will tell the world of how God's transforming power is at work among us and through us.

Flesh and blood: What is new in our church as we undergo God's transformation? The most beautiful expression of newness is the discovery of a new peoplehood. We are discovering new brothers and sisters in Christ. God's incarnational bent is being employed again in us. Newness is expressed in flesh and blood, not in new doctrine or new practice. It is important that we keep this understanding of what is happening at the forefront of our interpretation of this time: God is gifting us with an expanded fellowship. God is adding strength to our witness in both the strength of numbers and in the strength of new relationships. Everything else—a new understanding of mission, new organization and new leadership—is emerging from the basic need for new vehicles of ministry for a new people.

If I sound like a preacher, it is because I am one. I have been called from congregational ministry to serve a churchwide mission of transformation. Am I deserving of sympathy for this? Certainly not. I feel privileged to be granted this role as a participant in God's process of change and renewal in the Mennonite church.

I have posted several quotations on my office wall. One of them, written by Oliver Wendell Holmes, reads, "To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it, but we must sail, and not drift, nor lie at anchor." Another is from Jesus: "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

I carry these sentiments with me every day in my concern for our church's transformation—a task I share with scores of other leaders throughout the church. We all desire prayers for this work. As we respond to God's call together as a new Mennonite Church USA and allow God to send us into the world, God will richly bless us and give us new avenues for ministry that we can now hardly imagine. Transformation will bring all of us opportunities for witness and service.

Jim Schrag, Newton, Kan., is project director for the transformation of the U.S. part of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church into Mennonite Church USA.

MENNOS AT WORK

Jay L. Franz, Spokane, Wash.

Congregation: Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, Wash.

Occupation: journalist

Years in occupation: 29

Why I do what I do: I became seriously interested in journalism—more specifically a newspaper career—when I worked on *The Collegian*, the student newspaper at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. At their best, journalists help keep the public informed and aware of vital news and information, investigate and expose corruption and other problems that affect people's lives and help promote better communities—and a better quality of life—by reporting on efforts to solve various community problems and by being advocates for such things as controlled community development, economic justice, racial harmony and increased understanding. I also enjoy the fraternity of journalists and knowing various newsmakers and being in on the news as it happens.

The role of faith in what I do: Working as a journalist can lead to cynicism and skepticism, a feeling that everyone you meet either is trying to sell you on something or is trying to hide something. News usually focuses on conflict, warfare, crime, the ugliness in the world. Amid all this my faith helps keep me grounded. I am reminded to seek out and cover the good news stories, too: the students who are excelling, the people who are role models, the citizens who are working hard to make a difference for the better in their communities and the world. I am reminded it is important to report not just on conflict but on solutions. Most of all, my faith helps me see and focus on the good in the world and see Jesus at work there. My faith helps me remember to look for the good in people, especially those I might despise or have a tendency to look down on. In short, my faith helps me see the whole picture and helps keep me whole.

Tell us about your work, why you do it and the role of faith in it. Write to Gordon Houser, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, <gordonh@gcmc.org>. Please include a photo of yourself.

In 29 settings from coast to coast, 5,000 hear of transformation as preachers go to the people

ELKHART, Ind.—From Washington, D.C., to Washington state, from North Dakota to Texas, 17 Mennonite preachers over the last four months talked about making all things new.

The 17—pastors, professors, denominational board members and administrators—spoke to more than 5,000 people in 29 congregational settings on behalf of the new church, sharing the results of last winter's congregational study, "Envisioning a New Mennonite Church," and encouraging support for the transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church in the United States into Mennonite Church USA.

"We judge that the congregational gatherings have accomplished their goal of going to the people with the story of transformation to date and of enabling us to worship together," says Jim Schrag, director of the transformation project.

The gatherings started March 5, with Duane Beck, pastor of Belmont Mennonite Church in Elkhart, Ind., speaking at First Mennonite Church in Newton, Kan. They ended June 24, when John C. Murray, pastor of Hesston (Kan.) Mennonite Church, addressed the Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference annual sessions in Reedley, Calif.

"I believe that when people look back on the transformation process many years from now, these will be seen as one of the pivotal points in the process, when people stopped focusing on the problems and started focusing on the opportunities," says Ron Byler, Mennonite Church USA associate general secretary.

Diane Zaerr, a Mennonite Church USA Executive Board member and associate dean at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, was one of the preachers, speaking at gatherings in Iowa and Pennsylvania. She said that one of her favorite moments came after she spoke May 21 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church in Leola, Pa. She recalled an enthusiastic Lancaster Conference woman coming to her and saying, "I was on the fence until I came tonight, and this is so exciting I sure want to be part of it."

"It was helpful for transformation leaders to get out into the church and listen to people," says Jim Harder, another Mennonite Church USA Executive Board member and professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan. "The congregational gatherings also gave us an opportunity to express our enthusiasm for what is coming."

The theme for the gatherings came from Revelation 21:5—"Behold, I make all things new"—and although the preachers were not required to preach on that text, almost all did so.

"If you would read through the sermons from the gatherings, as I have, you would see a richness that would bring tears to your eyes," Byler says. "God has blessed us with wise leaders, people who are strongly committed to following Jesus and to sharing God's love."

One person who attended the Forest Hills gathering sent a check for the transformation process accompanied with this note: "It is exciting to see what God is doing in our denomination as he brings into being a new thing, transforming us from two bodies into one new denomination. God bless all of you who work so hard to bring peace and unity where there seems to be so much mistrust."

—Melanie Zuercher

What they said

Excerpts from some of the sermons preached at the 29 congregational gatherings:

At the core . . . is the belief that this is an opportune time to intentionally open ourselves to God's renewing work through Jesus Christ empowered by the Holy Spirt.
Duane Beck at Newton, Kan.; and Hydro, Okla.

God is hearing the spiritual hunger of the world and prayers for new life in our churches. God is making all things new.
Bernie Wiebe at Davidsville, Pa.; Sarasota, Fla.; and Casselton, N.D.

When our eyes are awakened to God's presence, we are able to see new possibilities, new growth, new questions, new paradigms.
Janeen Bertsche Johnson at Mountain Lake, Minn.; and Morton, Ill.

How great is the potential of the church of which we are a part, a potential that should be used to contribute to that desire of God to make all things new.
Gilberto Flores at Dallas

Pacific Southwest: We're in new church

With faith amid uncertainties, Pacific Southwest Conference has become the first U.S. area conference to officially declare its intent to join the new Mennonite Church.

Delegates approved the resolution at their annual assembly June 23-25 in Reedley, Calif.

New conference moderator Ruth Suter acknowledged that the resolution required "a leap of faith that the final [membership] guidelines aren't going to be something strange or something that we don't understand and can't live with."

Pacific Southwest is already a member of both the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church, created in 1994 from the merger of the GC and MC area conferences on the West Coast.

The assembly featured the final gathering in support of the transformation process, with the sermon given by John C. Murray. "I wasn't preaching to the choir," he told the gathering, "I was preaching to the maestros."

—GCMC News Service

Born among Chinese immigrants, Hong Kong churches now minister to new wave of arrivals

HONG KONG—The Conference of Mennonite Churches in Hong Kong was born in the 1960s among refugees who had come from mainland China in the 1940s and '50s. But now they find themselves reaching out to new immigrants from China, who are coming at the rate of 175 a day.

"The Mennonite churches of Hong Kong have come full circle," says Glenn Kauffman, Eastern Mennonite Missions' representative to Asia.

Ever since Hong Kong became a part of China in 1997, family members of Chinese citizens who are working in Hong Kong may immigrate on a controlled schedule. Women and children particularly swell the ranks of the newcomers. In order to fit into the school system, new immigrant children need tutoring, especially in math, Cantonese and English, the three subjects they find most difficult.

To meet this need, Hope Mennonite Church is running an after-school program for new immigrant children who live in the area. Fifteen to 20 youngsters come to the church from 3 to 6 p.m. several days each week. Volunteers from Hope and Grace Mennonite Church staff the program.

Agape Mennonite Church, which began in the 1960s as an outreach to students and developed into a congregation in the '70s, has recently reintroduced a ministry to students who live nearby and is considering expanding to include immigrant children.

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Iris Luk, executive secretary of the Conference of Mennonite Churches in Hong Kong, tutors Hong Tim in English at the after-school program for new immigrant children at Hope Mennonite Church in Hong Kong.

"It's exciting to see gifted young leaders like Simon [Szedu], pastor at Hope, and Jeremiah Choi, pastor at Agape, developing ministries that return the churches to their founding vision, especially the interest in the new immigrants from China," Kauffman says.

He says that many churches in Hong Kong have been unwilling to reach out to people on the lower levels of society.

Hong Kong is home to three Mennonite congregations.—*Jewel Showalter of EMM News Service*

Menno Simons takes political stage

Of all the things that get said on the floor of a legislative assembly, writings of Menno Simons are probably among the least common.

But on May 16, Saskatchewan legislator Pat Lorje was indeed quoting the former Catholic priest in support of the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Saskatchewan Act.

The bylaws and constitution for MCC Saskatchewan were discovered not to be in compliance with provincial legislation, and so a new act was necessary.

In sponsoring the bill, Lorje quoted Menno to her colleagues: "True evangelical faith cannot lie dormant. It clothes the naked, feeds the hungry, it comforts the sorrowful, it shelters the destitute, it serves those who harm it, it binds up that which is wounded, it has become all things to all men."

The bill passed and was eventually signed into effect. —*MCC Canada News Service*

Historic mission consultation planned

GUATEMALA CITY—Representatives from about 50 mission agencies from Anabaptist conferences around the world will gather in Guatemala City July 12-16 to confer about mission theology, goals and cooperation on a global level.

Called the Global Anabaptist Mission Consultation (GAMCo), it is sponsored by Mennonite World Conference and the Council of International Ministries, an association of North American Anabaptist mission and service agencies. The consultation will be held in conjunction with the regular meeting of MWC's General Council, which will meet with GAMCo.

While there have been a number of smaller such consultations, GAMCo will be the first to involve mission agencies from all corners of the earth.

Plenary addresses will be given by Anabaptists from the United States, Congo and Germany, as well as by representatives from broader mission networks. Participants will also meet in discussion groups and continental caucuses. Workshops will focus on the theology of missions and cooperation in missions.

According to a recent survey, more than 30 Anabaptist conferences are engaged in cross-cultural evangelism internationally.

Also meeting in Guatemala City will be MWC's Faith and Life Council and Peace Council. The Faith and Life Council will focus on common core elements of contemporary Anabaptism. The Peace Council, which held its first meeting at the Calcutta assembly, will examine Anabaptist peace efforts worldwide.

Fountain-top experience

Amber Heyden of Elkhart, Ind., cools off in a fountain at Goshen (Ind.) College June 24 during "For the World," a music festival that raised more than $8,000 for Mennonite Board of Missions. Twenty-seven performers played on five stages on the Goshen campus, drawing 750 people. Headlining the festival were pianist, poet and storyteller Ken Medema and the comedy duo of Ted & Lee.

Honduran found vocation in Florida

While an International Visitor Exchange Program participant, Melvin Flores worked five days a week at a nursing home. But it's what he did on Saturdays that propelled him to his current vocation.

Flores, a Honduran, is his country's executive director of Habitat for Humanity. He was introduced to the program in 1987 while placed in Sarasota, Fla., for the second half of his IVEP term. During that time he volunteered on Saturdays as a construction worker on local Habitat for Humanity projects.

"I had no idea there was a Habitat in Honduras, as well," says Flores, who has been executive director since 1994.—*MCC News Service*

IVEP prepared Indonesian for ministry

MCC program celebrating its 50th anniverary this year

SEMARANG, Indonesia—One day in 1969, Andreas Christanday was reading Jonah for his personal devotions. He did not understand how the text, "Go to the great city … " (Jonah 1:2), related to his life.

He soon found out.

Several days later, he was chosen by the GKMI Synod—one of three Indonesian Mennonite conferences—as one of the first two Indonesians to go to North America with Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) International Visitor Exchange Program (IVEP), which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

Most participants in the yearlong program spend six months each at two locations. Christanday's first IVEP assignment was in Arthur, Ill., where he worked in a plant nursery. He then moved to Lancaster, Pa., where he worked in a Provident Book Store.

"When I came back to Indonesia, I had learned many new things," Christanday says. "I learned to see people as equals and appreciate the differences between them. The most important thing I learned to appreciate was being Indonesian, because I realized that I can stand equal with people of other nations."

Following his return, he worked for two years as a co-pastor of a GKMI congregation. Christanday then started an interdenominational ministry called All for Christ. He called his IVEP experience "a kind of preparation to begin this holistic ministry."

All for Christ began as a traveling preaching and singing group. The ministry later became Christopherus Foundation, which grew to include theological education by extension, an orphanage, a music course and other programs.

In 1995 Christanday was named president of Asia Mennonite Conference, from which he retired last year. He believes that the confidence he gained through IVEP gave him strength for the position. Christanday is still working at Christopherus Foundation.

IVEP grew out of MCC work in post-World War II Europe. The U.S. Department of State approved the exchange program in the fall of 1949. The following May, 21 young men from France, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland arrived in the United States to begin their yearlong assignments as "farm trainees." In 1951, MCC began to accept both women and nonfarm placements. The first placements in Canada were made in 1960.

Since then, IVEP has had an estimated 3,000 participants from 73 countries, with Mozambique and Uganda the most recent additions. The 1999-2000 IVEP class has 65 participants from 31 countries.—*Lilik A. Setiyanto for MCC News Service*

Pittsburgh presents pastor with opportunities for outreach among Asians, Hispanics, Indians

PITTSBURGH—It's a long way from the turbulence of Honduras to the Steel City. But the connection is strong for Luke Schrock-Hurst, co-pastor of Pittsburgh Mennonite Church.

"Having worked with refugees and justice and peace issues in Central America with Mennonite Central Committee gives me a heart and a passion to reach out to Hispanic people here in Pittsburgh," says Schrock-Hurst, who served in Honduras from 1986 to 1989.

He is part of efforts to start a Hispanic Mennonite congregation in the city, which grew out of a Spanish-speaking Bible study Schrock-Hurst has been involved with. The group of four to five includes a graduate student from Colombia who is worried about the war ravaging his home country and a woman who left revolutionary Nicaragua in the 1980s.

"Anabaptist churches can be attractive to Hispanic people because of the peacemaking emphasis," Schrock-Hurst says. "If we don't begin a congregation, other denominations are going to, and we have much … to offer."

He is prepared to form partnerships with other Christians, such as the Brazilian Presbyterian he met who has been leading Portuguese and Spanish cell church meetings since 1992. "I assume God was at work in the Hispanic community long before I had this dream," Schrock-Hurst says.

Meanwhile, many resources have been going to an Indian-Asian church plant that held its first weekly services last December. Schrock-Hurst serves as the local pastoral contact for the congregation, giving encouragement to the church planters, Thinagar and Petty Sitther, who are also members of Pittsburgh Mennonite Church.

When the Sitthers visited two years ago, the dream was to develop a Mennonite congregation, since the city already had several ecumenical Indian Christian fellowships meeting. But Schrock-Hurst acknowledges that God sometimes has a different vision for mission. The multilingual group has become interdenominational, including Catholic members.

Seeing the Indian-Asian group on its feet is encouraging for Schrock-Hurst. "This helps me believe that in two or three years, we could be in the same place with the Hispanic community," he says.

Pittsburgh Hospitality House is another ministry asking for attention, since its board decided to temporarily close it to guests last fall because of financial and personnel issues. A former hostel for people visiting family members in state prison, the building continues to house the Pennsylvania Prison Society.

Schrock-Hurst says his goal is to "help Pittsburgh Mennonite catch the vision to see the old property as a ministry center." He considers it valuable ground for confronting racism because it lies in a transitional neighborhood between wealth and poverty. Ideas for use of the building include a summer computer camp, perhaps focusing on Spanish-speaking youth.

Schrock-Hurst is the newest of seven urban ministry directors supported by Mennonite Board of Missions' Evangelism and Church Development department in partnership with Mennonite Church regional conferences. He and his wife, Carmen, share one full-time pastoral position at Pittsburgh Mennonite Church. He says his MBM position allows him to give additional time where dreams need more attention.—*Anne Horst for MBM News Service*

I assume God was at work in the Hispanic community long before I had this dream.

— *Luke Schrock-Hurst*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Up close and personal

Ruth Christophel bonds with Sarah, an abandoned 2-month-old girl, in a Macau orphanage. Christophel, from Battle Creek, Mich., leads Eastern Mennonite Missions' Youth Evangelism Service team in Macau.

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Conferencegoers rate stores for violent toys

GOSHEN, Ind.—Three Goshen-area stores have been recognized for the toys found on their shelves. But for two stores, the award was no honor.

The awards were from participants at a workshop on violent toys during the joint assembly of Central District, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences, held in Goshen June 22-24. The conference participants visited six area toy stores to rate them on their sales of violent toys, such as guns and certain video games. A Goshen Wal-Mart received a certificate of merit for its low score, while another local Wal-Mart and Toy Works each received "certificates of toxicity" for their high scores.

"It just goes to show that store managers do have a role to play in what items are sold at the local level," says Rich Meyer of Goshen, creator of Christian Peacemaker Teams' "Violence Is Not Child's Play" campaign.—*CPT News Service*

Bethel adds restorative justice major

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Starting this fall, students at Bethel College in North Newton will be able to pursue a major that provides in-depth examination of the criminal justice system. The 39-hour restorative community justice major will concentrate on analysis of the criminal justice system, methods of community intervention, criminal justice practices and the theory and practice of reconciliation programs.

Trinidad churches hold first leadership seminar

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Twenty-two people attended the first leadership seminar of Trinidad's three Mennonite congregations, held in May. In attendance were pastors, spouses and other church leaders, plus visitors from the United States. The resource person was Myron Augsburger, retired pastor, former president of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonbug, and well-known evangelist.—*Connections*

MEDA fund part of new Canadian initiative

WINNIPEG—Canada's first socially responsible investment program will include Mennonite Economic Development Associates in its portfolio. MEDA's Sarona Global Investment Fund will be among the projects to be supported by the International Community Investment Deposit.—*MEDA News Service*

by the way …

Bolivia is home to 46 Mennonite colonies, up from 25 just six years ago.—*Evangelical Mennonite Missions Conference Recorder*

classifieds

- **Friendship Community** is actively seeking applicants for the ***program supervisor*** position. If you are interested in assisting adults with mental disabilities, call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466 ext. 102; email <amy.horst@friendshipcomm.org>. Christian mission. EOE

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** is seeking a ***director of assisted living***. This is a new position. Prior long-term care or personal care experience preferred. RN preferred. Should have current license as Personal Care Administrator or be willing to obtain. Must have good written and verbal communication skills and be able to work in collaboration with all disciplines.

  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543 or call 717-581-3936.

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** is seeking an ***administrative assistant*** to the pastoral care team. Responsibilities include planning and scheduling programs for chapels, and significant amounts of telephone and correspondence work. Requires word processing skills.

  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543 or call 717-581-3936.

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** has ***LPN opportunities*** in the Heritage Center for people with memory loss and in our skilled care area. Enjoy a friendly, family-oriented environment. Hours include full-time 3-11 or 11-7 and part-time 7-3 or 3-11. Positions in the Heritage include involvement in programming and hands-on care for 13 to 16 residents.

  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543 or call 717-581-3936.

- **Needed: *Administrator for Oregon Mennonite Residential Services***, located in Salem, Ore. Creative planner and organization builder with a strong sense of mission to work with people experiencing developmental disabilities. Program has 6 group homes, 60 employees and serves 30 clients. Must have 3-5 years of management-level experience in social services or health care (preferably faith-based) and an undergraduate degree.

  Send resume by July 24 to Tim Stair, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St., Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; email <timstair@compuserve.com>.

- **Covenant Children's Home**, a Christian social service agency in north central Illinois, is seeking applicants to fill the following positions for innovative, new residential program:

  Program coordinator: To provide leadership in refining and implementing a residential program with an emphasis on Christian character and computer vocational skills. B.A. or M.A. in human service field, 2-5 years experience in residential programming and supervision.

  Family coordinator: Cultivate vital community relationships, assess the growth and development of youth. B.A. in human services field, 2 years experience in case management.

  Family mentors: Strong desire to positively impact the lives of adolescents. HS diploma or GED, able to work variable shifts.

  Please send resumes by July 14 to Human Resources, Covenant Children's Home, P.O. Box 518, Princeton, IL 61356; email <Lyuhas@covenanthome.org>.

- **Western Mennonite School** is seeking qualified faculty and staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered educational setting. Summer 2000: ***Assistant principal:*** part-time position; responsibilities include supervision of instruction and curriculum for expanding middle school and high school programs. May be combined with teaching duties for full-time position. ***Facilities manager:*** full-time position; management and supervisory experience necessary to lead a team that maintains and cares for facilities, plant and grounds. The campus includes 6 buildings with multiple parking lots, driveways and 40 acres of forested property. Fall 2000: ***Spanish instructor:*** levels I, II and III; may also include ESL instruction. ***Assistant girls resident director:*** full-time voluntary service position; focus on team-oriented youth ministry. Responsibilities include counseling and assisting in coordination of activities. Housing, meals, medical coverage and monthly stipend provided.

  Western (grades 6-12) is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley in the Northwest. For information, contact Eric Martin, Principal, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000; email <Martines@teleport.com>.

Workers

Buck, Robert J., was licensed April 2 as assistant pastor of Hopewell Mennonite Church, Pottstown, Pa.

Cedeno, Hector, was licensed April 2 as pastor of Ebenezer Evangelical Mennonite Church, Bronx, N.Y.

Choi, Sang Jin, was ordained May 21 for leadership in the Potomac District of Virginia Conference.

Glick, Del, Goshen, Ind., will conclude his work as Indiana-Michigan Conference regional minister, effective Aug. 31.

Hess, Dan and Mary, Broadway, Va., will begin two-year terms with Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM) in Albania this fall.

Jurisson, Enno E., was ordained April 16 as pastor of Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

Kennell, Timothy, was ordained May 14 as pastor of Powhatan (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Onelangsy, Aaron, began March 25 as pastor of Laotian Ministries at Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Oppedisano, Chrissie, Nashville, Tenn., will begin a one-year VMBM term in Bari, Italy, this fall.

Peachey, Urbane, retired May 31 as pastor of Akron (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Rempel, John D., concluded a pastorate at Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship April 23. He is full-time director of Mennonite Central Committee's liaison office to the United Nations.

Roth, Nelson, was installed June 11 as pastor of Crossroads Community Church, Johnstown, Pa.

Yoder, Nelson S., was licensed May 21 as associate pastor of Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Yoder, Shirlee K., concluded a pastorate June 1 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Births

Beachy, Emma Elizabeth, June 16, to David and Wanda (Miller) Beachy, Kalona, Iowa.

Brooks, Summer Leigh, June 22, to Dennis and Sheri Brooks, Klaipeda, Lithuania.

Dayton, Madelyn Rose, June 17, to Rob and Sue Dayton, Quakertown, Pa.

Garges, Bradley Allen, June 18, to Jeff and Melissa (Mellott) Garges, Telford, Pa.

Hogan, Sean Patrick, June 16, to Dianne (Kehr) and John Hogan, Goshen, Ind.

Hoyt, Anne Cecilia, June 3, to Mary (Hostetler) and Peter Hoyt, Middletown, Conn.

Koehn, Alex Christopher, June 19, to Amber (Friesen) and Christopher Koehn, Newton, Kan.

Marolf, Kalee Nicole and Taylor Joshua (twins), Nov. 22, 1999, received for adoption June 6, 2000, by Brenda (Bush) and Jamie Marolf, Croghan, N.Y.

Reinford, Timothy Randall, June 16, to Elizabeth Joy (Good) and Randall Reinford, Sellersville, Pa.

Rupp, Augustus Richard and Zoe Wienss (twins), June 3, to Phil and Rita (Ruth) Rupp, South Bend, Ind.

Showalter, Rachel Catherine, May 5, to Jeanne (Shifflett) and Wes Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va.

Swartzendruber, Madison Elizabeth, May 9, to Cal and Karen (LeFevre) Swartzendruber, Goshen, Ind.

Timm, Tina Natilie, May 4, to Bob and Carol (Yoder) Timm, Underwood, N.D.

Ulloa, Joseph, June 18, to Jose and Pamela Ulloa, Phoenix.

Wright, Carrie Grace and Eli James (twins), June 17, to Jennifer (Wenger) and Jimmy Wright, Weyers Cave, Va.

Marriages

Ashburn/King: Todd Ashburn, Mishawaka, Ind., and Lynnette King, South Bend, Ind., May 27 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend.

Blossom/Litwiller: Kent Blossom, South Bend, Ind., and Theresa Litwiller, Wellman, Iowa, June 24 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Breeze/Troyer: Lara Breeze, Champaign, Ill., and Steven Troyer, Orrville, Ohio, June 17 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Brenneman/Stauffer: Rodney Brenneman, Stuarts Draft, Va., and Michele Stauffer, Ephrata, Pa., June 10 at Newmanstown, Pa.

Derstine/Frankenfield: Daryl Derstine, Dublin, Pa., and Sarah Elizabeth Frankenfield, Harleysville, Pa., Jan. 25, at Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

Duerksen/Turner: Dawnelle Duerksen, McPherson, Kan., and Scott Turner, June 10 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson.

Ebersole/Ebersole: Charles Ebersole, Washington, Ill., and Joyce Van Horne Ebersole, Sterling, Ill., June 18 at Menno Haven Camp, Tiskilwa, Ill.

Elliott/Riegsecker: Dan Elliott, Delta, Ohio, and Joetta Riegsecker, Wauseon, Ohio, June 17 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Forrester/Zumbach: Amy Forrester, Henderson, N.Y., and Brian Zumbach, Henderson, June 10 at Watertown (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Haprian/Miskell: James Haprian, Rittman, Ohio, and Angela Miskell, Rittman, June 9 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Rittman.

King/Miehls: Kristl King, Wauseon, Ohio, and Russ Miehls, Stryker, Ohio, June 10 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio.

Kuhl/Moser: Travis Kuhl, Croghan, N.Y., and Nicole Moser, Lowville, N.Y., June 17.

Miller/Ropp: Nathaniel Dennis Miller, Wellman, Iowa, and Stacy Lavone Ropp, Kalona, Iowa, June 10 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Thiessen/Wagner: Bruce Thiessen, Winnipeg, and Lyndell Wagner, Leola, Pa., May 28 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola.

Deaths

Augsburger, Grace, 87, Hesston, Kan., died June 15. Parents: John and Fanny Augsburger (deceased). Funeral: June 19 at Schowalter Villa, Hesston.

Hershberger, Weldon Oliver, 76, Hesston, Kan., died June 7 from a heart condition. Spouse: Amy Janzen Hershberger. Parents: Edward and Alma Hershberger (deceased). Other survivors: children Don, Roger, Ron, Kathy Nightingale, Sharon Taubert; 17 grandchildren. Funeral: June 11 at Hesston Mennonite Church.

Kauffman, Leslie Jacob, 89, Lebanon, Ore., died June 12. Spouse: Sylvia Bebb Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Levi and Nettie Sharp Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Carolyn Kenyon, Darrel, Leonard, Donald; 14 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at Lebanon Mennonite Church.

Knechel, Frank Anders, 80, Mifflinburg, Pa., died June 11 of cardiac surgery. Spouse: (1st) Kathryn Heebner Knechel (deceased); (2nd) Ruth Hafer Haire Knechel. Parents: Herbert Steinbach and Mary Anders Knechel (deceased). Other survivors: children Ray, Jane Ferrence, Carol Alderfer, Karen Kahler; stepchildren Nancy Fallon, Larry Haire, Thomas Haire; 11 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; six stepgrandchildren; one stepgreat-grandchild. Funeral: June 15 at Mifflinburg.

Neer, Eugene, 72, West Liberty, Ohio, died June 4 of an abdominal aortic aneurysm. Spouse: Rhoda Weber Neer. Parents: Earl and Edna Neer (deceased). Other survivors: children Lynn, Paul, Rose Berkey, Elizabeth Rhodes; 10 grandchildren. Memorial service: June 7 at United Bethel Mennonite Church, Plain City, Ohio.

Scheetz, Henry, 74, Telford, Pa., died June 14. Spouse: Beulah Heckler Scheetz. Parents: Richard and Mamie Roth Scheetz (deceased). Other survivors: children Cheryl Shreiner, Thomas, David; 10 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 19 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context by Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell (Eerdmans, 2000, $16) is a collection of essays and sermons reflecting on the authors' encounters with homeless people in Atlanta. These two seminary professors explore the significance of social location for exegesis, ethics, worship and preaching.

Herald Press Trade Books has entered into an agreement with Cokesbury Online Libraries for 15 Herald Press books to appear in their iPreach and iTeach Reference Libraries.

Prayer That Works by Jill Briscoe (Tyndale, 2000, $10.99) shares principles from effective prayers by looking at the life of Elijah in 1 and 2 Kings.

The Unwilling Celibates: A Spirituality for Single Adults by Jean Sheridan (Twenty-Third Publications, 2000, $14.95) addresses the needs, benign neglect, hurtful attitudes and aloneness that single adults experience and provides a blend of reflections, means and methods for spiritual growth to meet these situations.

No Such Thing as Over the Hill: Making the Most of Life After 60 by James R. Kok (CRC Publications, 2000, $7.75) challenges readers to rethink their notions about aging. It offers encouragement and counsel on topics such as retirement, dealing with physical limitations, sex and putting one's house in order.

Liberty in Confinement: A Story of Faith in the Red Army by Johannes Reimer (Kindred Productions, 2000, $3.95) follows the experiences of a young Christian conscripted into the Soviet Army.

Abundant Treasures: Meditations on the Many Gifts of the Spirit by Melannie Svoboda (Twenty-Third Publications, 2000, $9.95) offers insights into our personal relationship with God and how each gift of the Spirit helps this relationship flourish.

Straight Talk from a Brethren Sister by Wanda L. Callahan (Herald Press, 2000, $8.99) addresses 12 areas in which Callahan has been active in bringing change, including advocacy for the poor, for women in leadership and for prisoners on death row.

Race and Racism: Canada's Challenge, edited by Leo Driedger and Shiva S. Halli (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000, $19.95), brings together critical contributions from the academic and government sectors that analyze the nature and extent of racism in Canada.

Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology will be launched this fall by the Institute of Mennonite Studies, Elkhart, Ind., and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg. The journal will be published twice per year with the goal of helping church leaders reflect theologically on the identity, mission and practices of the church from an Anabaptist-Mennonite perspective. For information contact <bngingerich@ambs.edu>.

Immigrant Canada: Demographic, Economic and Social Challenges, edited by Shiva S. Halli and Leo Driedger (University of Toronto Press, 2000, $24.95), brings together scientists of many disciplines to research immigrants' socioeconomic and demographic differences.

Dancing With the Kobzar: Bluffton College and Mennonite Higher Education, 1899-1999 by Perry Bush (Pandora Press, 2000, $19.95, $34.95 hardcover) not only includes a narrative history of Bluffton (Ohio) College and a photo essay but considers Bluffton's unique role in Mennonite higher education.

Recommended reading

Out Walking: Reflections on Our Place in the Natural World by John Leax (Baker Books, 2000, $14.99) consists of short (two-page) reflections on the poet's experiences in his woodlot, garden and forays into nature. He blends memories, references to literature and close observation with theological meditations. In "A God to Thank," he writes, "I begin with my garden, tending it not only for my pleasure but for the well-being of the earth itself." Less confrontational than confessional, Leax's musings will nevertheless challenge readers to care more seriously for God's creation.—*gh*

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J. Lorne Peachey

Mennonite Church (1):

Where have we been?

After a dramatic rescue from Egypt through their trust in God, followed by 40 years wandering in a wilderness because of lack of trust, the children of Israel were camped on the edge of their promised land. But instead of giving them the lecture on trust they might have expected, God had them review their history.

Now it may be stretching the point to compare the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and the Mennonite Church (MC) with the children of Israel. But we too are on the verge of something new, of realizing a dream. One year from now, if all goes as scheduled, we will take the final steps at Nashville 2001 to becoming a new, integrated denomination.

Taking a cue from God's dealings with the children of Israel, as recorded in the book of Deuteronomy, we too might review our history. What can we learn from our past that will serve us well in our future? What values should we be sure to take with us into a transformed Mennonite Church?

Our future will be bright and will please God when we acknowledge the strengths of our history and seek to build on these values as we go into our promised land.

1. We are a people who take our faith seriously. Like Israel, both GCs and MCs have migrations in our history. In the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, our ancestors came to America for a better life as they understood it. That life revolved around faith: worshiping God and living out beliefs in everyday life. This included not participating in war and other acts of aggression as well as shunning alliances with other unholy aspects of a worldly society.

Over the centuries, we Mennonites have built strong communities, primarily around our religious beliefs. We have tried to follow Moses' words to the children of Israel: "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourself wholeheartedly to these commands" (Deuteronomy 6:5-6).

We continue to take our faith seriously. We do not have our current disagreements about membership, for example, just because we are a stubborn people or because we are prone to act more as individuals than as members of a group. Our debates come because we want to be faithful to God. Our church means a lot to us. We must take that intense caring with us into a new denomination.

2. We are a people who work diligently to share our faith. "Be sure to pass [these things] on to your children and grandchildren" was God's instruction to Israel (Deuteronomy 4:9). We Mennonites have followed that advice by providing some of the best Christian education materials for our children. We have also set up schools—elementary, secondary, collegiate and graduate—that rank up there with the best in both education and innovation.

But we also share our faith far beyond our immediate families. The past century particularly has seen us developing vigorous outreach programs, both at home and overseas. Missions continue to capture our imaginations. Some of the best energies and innovative thinking in the transformation process are taking place in this area—thinking that has the potential to energize the new church to become even more intentional about sharing our faith. Our past in missions is a great prelude to the future in sharing our faith.

3. We are a people who have learned to serve others. Mention Mennonites to many in our world, and, if they know us at all, it's likely through Mennonite Central Committee or Mennonite Disaster Service. Interestingly, these areas, which we commonly classify as relief and service, are two in which we have put aside our differences to work side by side.

And that has made a difference. We are known as a people who get things done, humbly yet persistently, often wading in where others fear to go. Usually we don't care who gets the credit. The spirit that brings that reputation—humble, selfless, persistent—we do well to guard as we begin a new Mennonite Church.

I paint an optimistic history. There are areas in which we did not do well: splintering, acculturating, isolating, condemning. But our future will be bright and will please God when we acknowledge the strengths of our history and seek to build on these values as we go into our promised land.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

July 18, 2000

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a conversation with Larry Miller

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Routine religion

Thank you for the wonderful editorial in the June 27 issue, "How to Keep One's Spiritual Life on Track." It ministered to me. I join in seeking freshness, meaning and accountability. The different approaches mentioned are relevant, above all seeking God rather than just experiential highs. I also find that there is need for the stimulus of other disciples and the need to call into check one's tendency to be routine. Once we have been Christians for a few decades—in my case half a century—we need to be aware of how easy it is to be routine in religious exercises.

I want to discover the more holistic ways of bringing my life into conformity to Christ, and I covet this for my brothers and sisters in the family of God. I join in prayer that the church as we see it forming may share the transforming work of the Spirit.—*Myron S. Augsburger, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Scattering and joining

Thank you for the June 27 article "Few Among None." David Yost has spoken for many who are searching to have a meaningful experience in Christian fellowship while attending other denominational worship places.

I would like to add one more suggestion that might help us in our witness. When a Mennonite joins the Presbyterian or Baptist church because no Mennonite congregation is in the area, why not call him or her a Mennonite-Presbyterian or a Mennonite-Baptist? We would achieve two things: (1) We would honor the faith heritage, and (2) we would also open ourselves to witnessing to our faith understanding.

We should offer the same privilege to people who join our Mennonite congregations. Why not talk about Lutheran-Mennonites or Catholic-Mennonites and in this way create the ecumenical dialogue that could enrich our congregational lives?

No doubt the scattering of Mennonites will continue. As David Yost suggests, we need to find some ways so that others might contribute their experiences also.—*Peter B. Wiebe, Glendale, Ariz.*

Bonds of fellowship

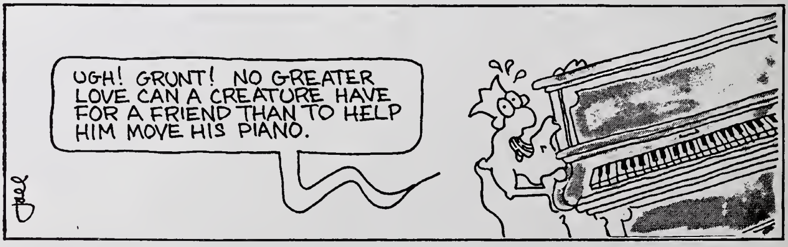
My wife, Ruth Bixler Reeser, grew up in Indiana and Ohio. I grew up in Oregon. Between us, we have attended four Mennonite schools, have been in 1-W Service and have served in five different voluntary service locations. We have been a part of 11 Mennonite congregations, all for at least two months, and some for many years.

We have fellowshipped with Millport Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.; Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church; Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church; Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio; College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.; First Mennonite Church, Denver; Iglesia Menonita del Cordero, Brownsville, Texas; Upland (Calif.) Brethren in Christ Church; Logsden (Ore.) Neighborhood Church (Mennonite); and Emmanuel Mennonite Church, La Junta, Colo. We have been members at Albany (Ore.) Mennonite Church for 36 years and members at Warden (Wash.) Mennonite Church for 25 years. Warden was a General Conference Mennonite Church congregation when we moved there and became members. Warden was later a dual-conference congregation and finally a part of the integrated Pacific Northwest Conference.

In every one of these congregations, we experienced a bond of fellowship. We will applaud the day when the integration process between the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church is complete. —*Clarence Reeser, Albany, Ore.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


UGH! GRUNT! NO GREATER LOVE CAN A CREATURE HAVE FOR A FRIEND THAN TO HELP HIM MOVE HIS PIANO.
Joel

theMennonite

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readers say

A church divided

It makes me want to cry when I read some of the letters in Readers Say. So many seem to think we should just overlook the homosexuals' sin and take them into church. No matter how they try to twist God's Word, homosexuality is still a sin according to Leviticus 20:13 and Romans 1:21-32. In 1 Corinthians 5:13, we are told how deal with sinners: "But them that are outside God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

Too many homosexuals try to convince us that their practices are just another lifestyle. We know by the way God formed us that it is not so. Homosexuals accuse us of being bigots and homophobic when we criticize their lifestyle out of love. Jesus certainly wasn't above criticizing the Pharisees. In Matthew 23, he calls them hypocrites, fools and blind. We should love homosexuals and try to lead them to Christ, but we should continue to hate their sin.—*Dorothy D. Liechty, Berne, Ind.*

In a church that for centuries has unequivocally prohibited all homicidal behavior but has come in recent years to accept a minority voice that approves selective homicidal behavior, it is simply not possible to believe that now the responsibility for "dividing the church" can be honestly blamed on a minority voice that would approve selective homosexual behavior.—*John K. Stoner, Akron, Pa.*

Culture of death

In the June 20 "Mennos at Work," Susan Goering mentions that some Mennonites oppose her work for the American Civil Liberties Union. Perhaps this is because the ACLU has contributed much to the culture of death by its advocacy of abortion, euthanasia and assisted suicide.—*Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

Cover photo by John Longhurst

Not just an occasional folk festiva

Executive secretary Larry Miller talks about Mennonite World Conference.

by Wally Kroeker

Somebody once asked Larry Miller, "So what do you do between assemblies?" Larry winces at the perception of Mennonite World Conference as an occasional folk festival. It's an image he wants to change. This summer Larry marks a decade at the helm of MWC. He began full-time just after Assembly 12 in Winnipeg, when the organization was in grim financial shape because of a below-budgeted turnout.

Some say Larry rescued MWC from oblivion. He deflects the compliment but doesn't deny there were some dark days.

He'd rather talk about the future. Along with president Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia and vice president Bedru Hussein of Ethiopia, he's trying to forge a new global identity for Mennonites.

The fundamental thing the church in the South can provide to the church in the North is a genuine transformational experience for people in their worldview and way of living.

—Larry Miller

"He'd like MWC to move beyond an assembly every six years or so to an actual global church," says a colleague. "He'd like to see it become a conduit for gifts to flow between the North and South."

He also wouldn't mind changing the name—to Mennonite World Communion, perhaps—to reflect a growing partnership among the world's million Mennonites, more than half of whom are African, Asian or Latin American.

A European for the past 25 years, Larry hails from midwest America. He grew up in a business-oriented family in Goshen, Ind.

"I was pretty much your typical rich kid in high school," he says.

That changed when he got to Goshen College. Influenced by the intellectual ferment of the times, he struggled to figure out what the Anabaptist vision meant in the Vietnam era. He had feet in two worlds, living between the business culture of his family and the activist culture of college life.

He experimented with new forms of service and accountability. He helped start an intentional community in Atlanta and worked in an anti-racism program at the National Council of Churches while living with a Mennonite pastor in Harlem.

About this time his father decided to give his children an early inheritance. Larry gave the money away.

"I believed I was one of those rich young rulers who should give his wealth away and follow Jesus," he says.

Any regrets?

"I couldn't do the work I'm doing today if I had wealth," he says. "It would make it harder for me to help amplify the voice of the South if I had big bank accounts. But I confess that when we are trying to pay for our house or help our kids pay for their education, I sometimes wish I had acted a little more like the rich young ruler."

He moved on to graduate theological studies in London and Paris, from where he also carried out various assignments under Mennonite Board of Missions.

Larry had met his wife, Eleanor, at Goshen. She had grown up in India, the daughter of missionaries. France seemed a good place to make their home.

"We wanted to create a new family culture that was between where she had grown up and where I had grown up," says Larry. "We thought we needed to create a new reality for ourselves in a neutral setting."

After several years in Paris, Larry and Eleanor moved in 1982 to Strasbourg, a picturesque French city near the German border. They have three children, all with dual citizenship: Anne-Marie studies and lives in Paris with her Parisian husband; Elisabeth is studying art history at the University of Strasbourg; Alexander is finishing high school.

Strasbourg, the seat of the European Parliament and the site of the 1984 Mennonite World Conference assembly, also has a first-division soccer team, notes Larry, an avid fan who played the game himself until a knee injury forced retirement. When he's on the road he keeps up with the latest scores on the Internet.

He gets animated describing the nuances of the sport, like a scoreless tie going through overtime and forcing a shoot-out.

"You've got 35,000 people screaming their heads off, and I wonder, Why couldn't church be like this a little more often?" Larry says. "There's communion at those soccer matches, though when your team does poorly it really breaks down."

Larry finished his doctorate in 1995 at the University of Strasbourg. His dissertation, written in French, is on Christianity and society in 1 Peter.

"That's the first book in the New Testament to make church and society its central issue," he says. "It deals with issues like whether Christianity reinforced the social order or tended to transform it."

Larry had gone through a lengthy academic process to discern the text's message about the suffering church. When he led Bible studies on the topic in Indonesia and Africa, Mennonite leaders said, "Yeah, we know that."

"With their firsthand experience of suffering they readily grasped what 1 Peter is saying," says Larry. "They told me that the book reflects their situation and helps them figure out how to respond in it."

Larry hopes MWC can become more of an avenue for shared teaching and witness among world church bodies.

The average North American Mennonite in the pew, however, seems to have little felt need for the rest of the world church. Larry attributes this partly to the independent culture of the North and partly to a Mennonite ecclesiology that tends to emphasize the local church.

He expects that to ease in the next generation as the church in the North continues to undergo turmoil and change. "It's not a felt need now, so we have to work at it. But I think that's where it's headed," he says.

Helping the process along will be continued North-South interactions through mechanisms like MWC.

"The fundamental thing the church in the South can provide to the church in the North is a genuine transformational experience for people in their worldview and way of living," Larry says. "Generally I think that happens best when there's face-to-face contact."

Working with Mennonite churches around the world has been "a source of life" for Larry. "It has been a huge privilege to work with churches in the South that have nothing and have as many conflicts as we do and yet there's still a vitality there."

That experience, he says, undergirds everything he does with Mennonite World Conference. "I've received life through that connection."

Wally Kroeker, editor of Marketplace, *wrote this article for Meetinghouse, a Mennonite editors group.*

Tragedy

by Gail Zwirn

Tragedy is relative—we all
know this, reading newspapers:
the coastal hurricane

my morning fiction, my pause
for thought, a "learning experience,"
they say. And I remember periodically

that I *will* be leaving here one day,
climbing quickly from this
shell of me to where

the green and orange and
rusty red trees—plead
for paradise, arguing convincingly

that I probably will be
the freedom fighter at last,
the revolutionary full of dash

and color, reaching
the stars.

But when you come home
Sunday morning from your
walk, with your story

about the car with the woman in it
talking over her shoulder
and the two or three inches

that kept you here with me,
with "miracle" running
from your serious, sober mouth …

I am no believer in stars,
no trailblazer,
no Gandhi, patient with faith …

but the child that Adam knew,
shivering in his garden
at his long, hard future,

clinging to *this* tree and that one
for any leaf to cover him,
and for safe traveling

the treacherous backroads …
so far from his father's
wild and lovely home.

Gail Zwirn lives in Pittsburgh.

Judge fait

Lessons on membership from Isaiah and Jesus

by Mitchell Brown

Arguments over membership in the church are not new. Witness chapter 56 in the book of Isaiah. Israel is about to come back from exile; finally the temple is being rebuilt. But there is a problem. While the exile has been going on (really only the exile of an elite), an active community has popped up in the ruins. Now this community is threatened.

It is threatened because the rebuilders coming back from exile are serious about their religion. They are also traditionalists, planning to rebuild the community along scriptural lines. They have their Scriptures in front of them (at least part of them anyway, since these folks, these reforming rebuilders, will in the end give us our Old Testament). As they look at the community of the ruins they see some problems: These people are not scriptural. Indeed, they have allowed Gentiles and eunuchs as members. We can almost picture the reforming preacher holding up his scroll saying: "See, right here: no Gentiles, no eunuchs. See right here. It is against God's Word."

This comes as a shock to the faithful members of the ruins community who have been worshiping all this time. And it is to these folks that the prophet speaks:

Prophets often are in conflict with the written Law. From Isaiah's time to ours membership is controversial.

"Thus says the Lord: To the eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, ... and the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, ... these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer" (Isaiah 56:4,6,7a).

The message is clear: God is no fundamentalist when it comes to Scripture. That, after all, is why we have prophets in the first place; somebody needs to read the signs of the times. Prophets often are in conflict with the written Law. From Isaiah's time to ours, membership is controversial. What then are we to do?

One possibility is to simply throw up our hands and say, Who cares? Why all this wasted time and energy over membership? This is not important, this is legalistic harkening back to the most picayune issues of Mennonite history. But we can't do this.

Why we can't do this is evident in Matthew 16:19, where Jesus "gives" Peter the keys to the kingdom and the authority to bind and loose. Peter receives the power of deciding membership because he confessed Jesus as the Messiah. Inextricably bound up with who Jesus is is the constitution of his people, his church. You can't have faith without an embodied faith community. Who is a member is not just important; it is all-important. It is at the heart of the Mennonite tradition to realize this. For our Christianity is finally not a matter of belief in some dogma, in some authority; it is not finally living according to this or that code of conduct; it is joining in community with others to be the body of Christ in this world. So membership is not just important, it is all-important, for it is all that we have.

Membership controversy: Let us turn to Jesus for an answer and to certainly one of the strangest stories in the Gospels, the story of the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28. Even Jesus gets involved in the same kind of membership controversy. Jesus is approached by a whining Gentile. ("She keeps shouting after us," the disciples complain.) After refusing her two times—once cordially ("I am sent only to the house of Israel," v. 24) and once almost viciously ("It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to dogs," v. 26)—only then does Jesus give in.

Jesus' first two responses to the woman were "traditional": Just like the rebuilders in Isaiah, Jesus operated from tradition, from Scripture. He knew that Scripture sent him to Israel and not to the lost Gentiles surrounding Israel. So when confronted by a "member" who doesn't fit, who on technical, scriptural grounds doesn't belong, Jesus does the traditional thing and turns her away.

Why did Jesus do this? What possible good could come from turning somebody away from God? Again we see here the importance of membership. If membership is to make sense, to have any meaning, we must turn some people away. Jesus knew this.

Jesus is teaching us here that it makes no sense to talk about saving an individual. We in the United States are so imprinted with the notion of individualism, of freedom, of choice that we can't hardly believe that Jesus didn't think this way. No indeed. Jesus was not a liberal American.

To put this question starkly: Can the individual be saved apart from the community? The answer, I think, is no. Individuals are not

ace-to-face

saved; or rather they are saved only in the context of the community. Jesus doesn't save individuals; he saves communities. Jesus came to bring the kingdom of God, which is above all a community.

This is the particular genius of the Mennonite tradition, to realize that salvation must come in the context of a community. It's not that individuals aren't saved; it's just that that notion has no meaning. Salvation is known in the saved community; it can't be experienced alone; it demands other people; it demands communal worship; it demands communal singing.

When Jesus turned his back twice upon that Canaanite woman, he did so because he knew he couldn't save her daughter as an individual but only as part of Israel, and he apparently wasn't ready for that yet.

With this in mind, let's consider the current membership dispute. Having focused on community, we must admit that standards for membership are important, and the Mennonite Church has this exactly right. But they fail when they try to apply a churchwide standard for membership.

Face-to-face: When Jesus acknowledges the Canaanite woman by saying, "Woman, great is your faith," he turns his back on Scripture and tradition. He does this because he looks into that woman's eyes and sees that her faith is genuine. He could not do this unless he could see her face-to-face. This then must be the paradigm for membership decisions: Only those in a direct relationship can judge one's readiness to be part of this people of God. This must be a decision of small, intimate communities, not large structures that spell out criteria ahead of time.

This is the message of this uncomfortable story about Jesus. Jesus started out acting as a "church" bureaucrat: no Gentiles, just as there were to be no eunuchs in Isaiah's time. But as he looked at this individual woman he knew that the decision could not be made at that level but only at the face-to-face level. So he welcomed the woman because of her faith. Did Jesus change his mind? More importantly, can we change our mind in the face of such faith, even if it means overturning longstanding traditions?

Mitchell Brown is pastor at Evanston (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

Jesus doesn't save individuals; he saves communities. Jesus came to bring the kingdom of God, which is above all a community.

South Central, Western District give merger plan first hearing while membership still unresolved

TULSA, Okla.—Delegates from South Central and Western District conferences have given their responses to a preliminary plan to form a new integrated area conference. But their discussions belie the primary obstacle to such a creation: South Central and Western District's divergent approaches to membership.

Both the regional merger and the suggested Mennonite Church USA membership guidelines were business agenda items and workshop topics during the two conferences' joint annual meeting July 7-9 in Tulsa.

According to the regional merger plan, one new conference would be created out of the 132 congregations in South Central, Western District and Rocky Mountain conferences stretching from Colorado to Arkansas and from Nebraska to Mexico. The conference would be divided into six mission districts, an idea that generated some concerns.

During a workshop at Tulsa, Western District delegate John Yoder-Schrock asked why not turn the districts into new conferences. "We want to [eliminate] bureaucracy levels, the multilevel organizations," he said.

Some of those districts don't have the resources to do ministry, responded Kathy Goering Reid, a member of the integration committee and pastor of Austin (Texas) Mennonite Church. The proposed Mid-Texas district would have only 6 percent of the congregations and 2 percent of the membership of the new conference.

"We are very dependent on brothers and sisters in congregations farther away," Reid said.

Other uncertainties included funding and locus of authority—questions that don't all yet have answers. "In some sense, this is a risk, a real risk, because we don't know and can't tell you," said Rocky Mountain moderator Roger Hochstedler, who helped lead the workshop.

The integration committee next year hopes to bring a formal proposal for action by Rocky Mountain, South Central and Western District delegates. If approved, the new conference could be in place by 2002.

While addressing the creation of a new conference, still unresolved is the crucial question of who will be in it, according to documents from conference leaders. In May, Western District's staff and executive and ministerial committees drafted a statement declaring that sex is reserved for husbands and wives. But the statement also included conference leadership's commitment "to remain in full relationship with those whose views or interpretations of the current statements of the church are different from our own."

In response, the South Central executive committee and staff released at Tulsa a statement affirming church statements on sexuality and calling for prayers for "God's wisdom, discernment and truth for regional and denominational leaders."

The two statements' differing messages are "certainly something that needs reconciliation," said Howard Hershberger, South Central outgoing moderator.

Kevin Goertzen, Western District outgoing moderator, doesn't think his conference's statement will hurt the regional integration process. "We're stating where we're at, not that we're unwilling to move," he said.

The statement was not discussed or acted on during delegate sessions or workshops.

At the heart of the disagreement is the status of Rainbow Mennonite Church in Kansas City, Kan. Formerly a member of both conferences, Rainbow lost its South Central membership in 1998 because it belongs to the Supportive Congregations Network. Rainbow remains a member in good standing of Western District.

"I can't imagine that Western District and South Central would integrate our two conferences until some resolution is made about Rainbow," Goertzen told a conference workshop on the Mennonite Church USA membership guidelines.

In situations of dual-conference congregations disciplined by one conference but not the other, the proposed membership guidelines call for the two conferences to work together to determine the congregation's membership status in Mennonite Church USA. But their decision can be challenged by another conference, a provision that was met with opposition from Western District delegate Wes Bergen.

"You are potentially giving conferences sticks they can use on one another," he said.

South Central moderator John Otto responded, "I simply see it as a safeguard, of being accountable to one another."—*Rich Preheim*

Delegates take no action on abortion

With issues related to membership and homosexuality still swirling, Western District Conference delegates tackled another hot-button topic during their annual meeting July 7-9 in Tulsa, Okla.

At last year's sessions, the issue of partial-birth abortion was commended to the conference's Peace and Social Concerns Committee for possible action this year.

The committee's recommendation this year, however, was no action.

"We are not all in agreement about what to do about the problem of abortion," committee chair Gay Kauffman said.

She told the delegates that some members, while opposed to abortion, also do not want to see the procedure returned to the "back alleys" of pre-*Roe v. Wade*.

But delegate Michael Knowles said, "By trying not offend those brothers and sisters, you offend those opposed to the heinous crime of partial-birth abortions."

Kauffman reminded the delegates that the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church have each passed statements on abortion.—*Rich Preheim*

AMBS window

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Reflections

Where are all those graduates?

Nelson Kraybill, AMBS President

"What do AMBS graduates *do* after they graduate?" AMBS board member David Boshart held up last year's list of graduates at the February board meeting and challenged me to explain how these men and women are serving the church. He wanted to be sure that, in addition to providing a splendid environment for spiritual and intellectual growth, the seminary was preparing people for leadership in the church.

I had no statistics at that time to back up my belief that AMBS grads are serving the church. So student assistant Amy Vachon contacted recent AMBS graduates and her report on all graduates from the last three years is this:

1997–1999 AMBS graduates
108 total

Pastors	57
Pastoral counselors, chaplains, spiritual mentors	6
Missionaries, staff at Mennonite educational institutions and Mennonite publications, teachers	27
Further graduate studies	8
In transition or at non-church-related jobs	10

If I needed a boost to get me through the last weeks of a busy semester, that simple set of statistics provided it. My biggest fear about becoming a seminary administrator was that I would be too far from the cutting edge of the church. Instead, I find AMBS students and faculty eager to connect what they teach and learn with the mission of the church and needs of the world. The AMBS faculty is the most traveled group of colleagues I've had, and they are busy teaching, preaching and serving with the church in a wide variety of settings around the world.

Although the largest percentage of AMBS alumni serve as pastors, it's encouraging to see that seminary education prepares men and women for a variety of other ministry and service roles—including chaplains, spiritual directors and teachers. At least 82 percent of recent AMBS graduates are working in ministry positions. More than seven percent are in further graduate school; these will be the new generation of college and seminary teachers.

There is a long history of church leaders carrying out a variety of roles. Paul the apostle named apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11). Ancient church documents reveal that in Rome in the middle of the third century there was one bishop, forty-six elders, seven deacons, seven subdeacons, forty-two acolytes, fifty-two exorcists, plus readers and doorkeepers!

Recently the Mennonite Ministerial Leadership Services reported there are 140 congregations looking for pastors. If you feel the call of God in your life to serve the church, consider coming to AMBS and exploring pastoral ministry. Nearly half of AMBS students become pastors—but there is a wide range of other avenues for meaningful witness. If you are a supporter of AMBS, rejoice that your contribution is helping prepare men and women who will serve the church in diverse and effective ways.

Inside

Graduates prepared for serving the church

January at AMBS

Graduates prepared for serving the church

Forty students graduated from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary on May 19. Twenty-six received the Master of Divinity degree. Three were awarded the Master of Arts in Peace Studies, and eleven the Master of Arts in Theological Studies, with one graduate receiving both of these master's degrees. This year was the first year that the Master of Arts in Christian Formation was awarded and one student received this degree.

Key:
MDiv: Master of Divinity
MATS: Master of Arts in Theological Studies
MAPS: Master of Arts in Peace Studies
MACF: Master of Arts in Christian Formation

AMBS Graduate Malinda Berry (right) and her sister, Anne, celebrate following the commencement service. Malinda will return in fall to complete a few final credits and then anticipates further graduate study. Malinda earned the Master of Arts in Peace Studies degree, and served on the Peace and Justice Committee and Damascus Road team at AMBS.

Left to right: Humphrey Akogyeram, Brian Arbuckle, Beverly Baumgartner, Malinda Berry, Ken Beidler, Gail Blum

Humphrey Akogyeram. MATS in Biblical Studies. Will teach at Good News Theological College and Seminary in Ghana. Humphrey and Mary Cooke, his wife, have two children. He is a member of the Christian Church of Ghana, and is the son of Edmund O. Akogyeram and Sophia K. Abbey of Accra, Ghana.

Brian Arbuckle. MDiv. Will continue as pastor of Marion Mennonite Church, Shipshewana, Ind. Brian and Gwendolyn, his wife, have two children. He is the son of Marjorie Glamkowski of Remington, Ind.

Malinda Berry. MAPS. Will continue studies at AMBS in the fall. Malinda is a member of Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship and is the daughter of LeeRoy and Beth Berry of Goshen.

Beverly Baumgartner. MDiv. Will serve as chaplain for Schowalter Villa, Hesston, Kan. Beverly is married to Joel Ewy, and is the daughter of Daniel and Loretta Baumgartner of Versailles, Mo. She is a member of Bethel Mennonite Church, Fortuna, Mo., and Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.

Ken Beidler. MDiv. Will continue working with Service Adventure, Mennonite Board of Missions; will pursue a pastoral ministry assignment in the future. Ken is married to Elaine Shenk, and his parents are Luke and Dorothy Beidler of Norristown, Pa.

Gail Blum. MDiv. Began a one-year chaplaincy residency in March at Foote Hospital, Jackson, Mich. Gail and Peter, her husband, have two children. Her parents are Rufus and Thelma Martin of Nappanee, Ind. She is a member of Salem Mennonite Church, Waldron, Mich.

Nestor Raúl Bogoya. MDiv. Will work part-time with North Goshen Mennonite Church in the area of community ministry; also hopes to continue studying. Raúl is married to Lisa Enns-Bogoya, a 1999 AMBS graduate. His parents are Roberto Bogoya and Flor Alba López of Santafé de Bogotá, Colombia.

Four members of the graduating class were recipients of the AMBS Church Leadership Award early in their studies at AMBS. This scholarship award is given to incoming students who demonstrate strong gifts for leadership in the church. It pays full tuition for three years for students in the Master of Divinity program. The four graduates were:

- *Todd Friesen, pictured at right, will serve as pastor of Lombard (Ill.) Mennonite Church.*
- *Rachel Miller Jacobs will complete her studies at AMBS this fall and is seeking a pastoral ministry assignment.*
- *Brad Schantz anticipates further graduate study in the future.*
- *Valerie Smith and her husband, Michael, are pursuing an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee.*

Left to right: Raúl Bogoya, Heather Brown, Carmen Brubacher, Ray Brubacher, Kelly Carson, Teresa Dutchersmith Not pictured: Christopher Dare

Heather Brown. MACF. Will volunteer at Oaklawn Psychiatric Hospital, Goshen, Ind., and continue studying. Heather attends Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart. Her parents are Jean Brown of Deganwy and Robert Brown of Hastings, England.

Carmen Brubacher. MDiv. Pursuing a service assignment with Mennonite Central Committee. Carmen is married to Paul Heidebrecht, a 2000 AMBS graduate, and they have one son. Her parents are Ray and Margaret Brubacher of Ephrata, Pa. She is a member of Elmira Mennonite Church, Elmira, Ont.

Ray Brubacher. MDiv. Will continue working with Mennonite World Conference as Director of Special Projects. Ray and Margaret, his wife, have three children, including Carmen Brubacher, also a 2000 AMBS graduate. They are members of Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa. He previously held the bachelor of divinity degree from Goshen Biblical Seminary and with additional study qualified for the master of divinity degree.

Kelly Carson. MDiv. Will participate in Clinical Pastoral Education at St. Joseph Regional Medical Center in South Bend, Ind., during the summer and will enter the residency program there in the fall. In August she will marry Virgil Sauder, a 1999 AMBS graduate. She is a member of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen. Her mother is Carla Carson, Bloomington, Ind.

Christopher Dare. (Not pictured) MDiv. Pastor of Cromwell (Ind.) United Methodist Church. Christopher and Jami, his wife, have three children. He is the son of Glennard and Roberta Dare of Mishawaka, Ind.

Teresa Dutchersmith. MDiv. Pursuing a ministry assignment in a congregation or healthcare setting. Teresa and Kent, her husband, have one daughter. She participates in Sunnyside Mennonite Church, Elkhart. Her parents are Lorraine Sayre of Navarre, Ohio, and the late David Dutcher.

This year's graduating class included nine students from outside of North America. Humphrey Akogyeram, pictured at left, will return to Ghana where he will teach at Good News Theological College and Seminary. Other international students in this class came from India, Korea, Japan, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, England and Nepal.

Left to right: Dennis Fehr, Todd Friesen, Sally Weaver Glick, Paul Heidebrecht, Michele Hershberger
Not pictured: Kevin Farmwald, Brenda Gordon

Kevin Farmwald. (Not pictured) MDiv. Will continue as pastor of First Mennonite Church, Sugarcreek, Ohio. Kevin and Susie, his wife, have two children. His parents are Leon and Esther Farmwald of Nappanee, Ind.

Dennis Fehr. MDiv. Will participate in Clinical Pastoral Education this summer and is pursuing a vocation of therapeutic ministry. Dennis is married to Karmen Krahn Fehr and is the son of Peter and Rose Fehr of Mordon, Man. He is a member of Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Todd Friesen. MDiv. Will become pastor of Lombard Mennonite Church, Lombard, Ill. He is married to Dennette Alwine, and is a member of Southside Fellowship, Elkhart. He is the son of Carol Nickel of Elkhart and LeRoy Friesen of Tylerton, Md.

Sally Weaver Glick. MATS in biblical studies. Will pursue writing and editing and serve as an instructor for the Pastoral Studies Distance Education program. She and John, her husband, have two children. She is a member of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, and is the daughter of Henry and Mary Weaver of Goshen.

Brenda Gordon. (Not pictured) Began June 1 as pastor of Hinchman and Oronoko United Methodist Churches in southern Michigan; will pursue chaplaincy in the future. Brenda is a member of Hope United Methodist Church, Edwardsburg, Mich. Her parents are Florence Gordon of Edwardsburg, Mich., and Harvey Gordon, Jr., of Mayie Springs, Idaho.

Paul Heidebrecht. MATS in theology and ethics. Pursuing an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee. Paul and his wife, Carmen Brubacher, a 2000 AMBS graduate, have one son. His parents are Kurt and Ruth Heidebrecht of St. Catharines, Ont. He is a member of St. Catharines United Mennonite Church.

Michele Hershberger. MATS in biblical studies. Will become Bible instructor at Hesston College, Hesston, Kan. Michele and Del, her husband, have three children. She is a member of Zion Mennonite Church,

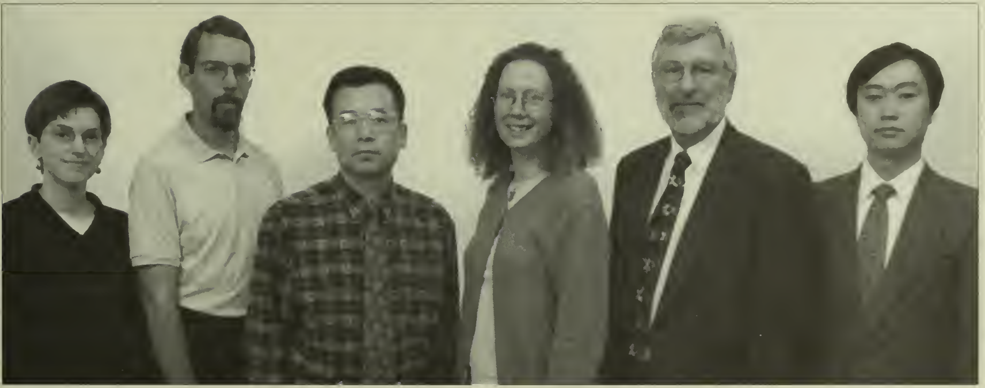
Commencement

Graduates encouraged to participate in God's kingdom

"I am convinced that Christendom has developed a tradition of evasion of the way of Jesus," Glen Stassen said at the beginning of his commencement address. He continued by selecting key passages of the Sermon on the Mount, noting how they call Christians to "participative grace." These focus on "transforming initiatives that are concrete, practical and do-able," he said.

In his conclusion, Stassen challenged the graduates to "teach and preach the way of Jesus as the way of participation in the grace of the inbreaking of God's kingdom."

Glen Stassen is Lewis B. Smedes professor of Christian ethics at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif.



Left to right: Rachel Miller Jacobs, David Jennys, Kwangshik Kim, Marlene Kroeker, Lloyd Miller, Norihiro Miyazaki
Not pictured: Garry Jost, Ram K.C.

Hubbard, Ore., and attends Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart. Her parents are John Dale and Phyllis Schrock of Garden City, Mo.

Rachel Miller Jacobs. MDiv. Pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment. Rachel and Randall M. Jacobs, her husband, have three children. She is a member of College Mennonite Church, Goshen, and is the daughter of Ruthann Miller of Elkhart and the late Marlin E. Miller.

David Jennys. MDiv. Will serve as pastor of Wanatah Faith United Methodist Church, Wanatah, Ind. He and Susan, his wife, have two children. He is the son of Harold W. Jennys of Dover, Del.

Garry Jost. (not pictured) MDiv. Software developer in Beaverton, Ore., and instructor for Greek, Hebrew and other Bible courses at Marylhurst (Ore.) University. Garry and Gloria, his wife, have two children. He attends Portland Mennonite Church.

Ram K.C. (Not pictured) MATS in theology and ethics, and MAPS. Will continue working as an adult case worker at Oaklawn, Goshen. Ram is originally from Nepal.

Kwangshik Kim. MDiv. Pursuing a pastoral ministry assignment. Kwangshik and Haeja, his wife, have three children. He is a member of Shimweol Church in Korea.

Marlene Kroeker. MDiv. Marlene is married to Mark Regier. She is a member of First Mennonite Church, Vineland, Ont., and is the daughter of Peter and Mary Kroeker of Vineland.

Lloyd Miller. MDiv. Will continue as conference minister of the Central District Conference. Lloyd is married to Joan Yoder Miller and they have two children. He is a member of Southside Fellowship, Elkhart. He is the son of Celesta Miller of Elkhart.

Norihiro Miyazaki. MATS in theology and ethics. Will be pastor of Misato Mennonite Church near Tokyo Japan. He and Seiko, his wife, have one child. His is the son of Masao and Tomiko Miyazaki of Masato City, Japan.

A surprise for the graduating class in the commencement service was the benediction, "The Lord bless you and keep you," by Lutkin, sung by the seminary faculty and staff. Rebecca Slough, assistant professor of church music, directed this group as well as the seminary choir who also performed in the service.

Left to right: Alex Naula, Terry Parker, David Pfaltzgraff-Carlson, Arlene Pipkin, Anna-Lisa Salo, Brad Schantz

Alex Naula. MATS in biblical studies. Will complete work at AMBS in the fall and anticipates graduate school in the future. Alex is a member of the El Buen Pastor congregation in Goshen, Ind. His parents are Juan and Inéz Naula, Ecuador.

Terry Parker. MATS in theology and ethics. Will continue as pastor of Michiana Christian Community Church, South Bend, Ind. Terry and Rebecca, his wife, have three children. He is the son of Willa Mae Parker of Mishawaka, Ind.

David Pfaltzgraff-Carlson. MATS in theology and ethics. Will pursue creative writing. David is married to Rhonda Pfaltzgraff-Carlson and is the son of Paul and Carla Carlson of Cincinnati, Ohio. He is a member of Columbus Mennonite Church.

Arlene Schenk Pipkin. MDiv. Will serve as pastor of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, Manhattan, N.Y. Arlene and H.W. Pipkin, her husband, have two children. She is the daughter of William T. Schenk, Newton Highlands, Mass.

Anna-Lisa Salo. MDiv. Will serve as assistant pastor of Leamington (Ont.) United Mennonite Church. Anna-Lisa is a member of Waters Mennonite Church, Lively, Ont., and is the daughter of Wilfred and Helen Salo of Lively.

Brad Schantz. MDiv. Will work part-time at AMBS and anticipates beginning graduate studies in fall 2001. Brad attends Belmont Mennonite Church, Elkhart, and is the son of Ben and Linda Schantz of Beemer, Neb.

Timothy Schultz. MDiv. Will continue as pastor of Harris Hill Mennonite Church, Clarence, N.Y. Timothy is the son of Carol Schultz of Clarence, N.Y.

Carol Scott. MATS in church history. Will continue as director of music ministries at Northwest United Methodist Church, South Bend, Ind. Carol and David, her husband, have one child.

Carmen Brubacher had more than one reason to celebrate at commencement. She earned the Master of Divinity degree; her husband, Paul Heidebrecht, earned the Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree; and her father, Ray Brubacher, earned the Master of Divinity degree.

Carmen, Paul and their son, Conrad, are anticipating an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee. Ray and Margaret, his wife, are working on special assignments with Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg, France.

Carmen, Paul and Ray were among the eight graduates from Canada.

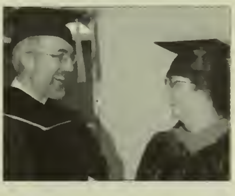
Left to right: Timothy Schultz, Carol Scott, Valerie Smith, Arthur Smoker, Jr., Girma Teklu, Wayne Mark Thomas

Valerie Smith. MDiv. Pursuing an assignment with Mennonite Central Committee with her husband, Michael Smith. She is a member of Charleswood Mennonite Church, Winnipeg, Man., and is the daughter of Mary and Denny Smith of Winnipeg.

Arthur Smoker, Jr. MDiv. Will continue as pastor of North Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. Arthur and Nora Jean, his wife, have two children. His parents are Arthur Smoker, Sr., and Dorothy Smoker of Coatesville, Pa. He previously held the bachelor of divinity degree from Goshen Biblical Seminary and with additional study qualified for the master of divinity degree.

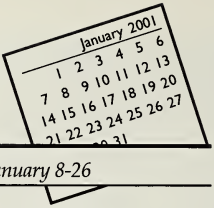
Girma Teklu. MATS in biblical studies. Will teach in M.K.C. College in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. He is a member of Meserete Kristos Church.

Wayne Mark Thomas. MAPS. Wayne Mark is originally from India and is the grandson of Lizzie Thomas of Calcutta, India. He attends Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen.



Carol Scott said she accomplished two goals at commencement: she graduated with a Master of Arts in Theological Studies degree, and marched to her own music. She composed the organ pieces that were played as the processional and recessional for the service.

January at AMBS



Interterm *January 8-26*

Hebrew Readings: Prophets
Perry Yoder, AMBS
Isaiah
Ben Ollenburger, AMBS
Anabaptist History and Theology
Karl Koop, AMBS
Church and Mission: Latin American Perspective
Juan Martinez, Ph.D., rector, Latin American Anabaptist Seminary, Guatemala City, Guatemala. Course meets in Guatemala.
Dynamics of Church Planting and Growth
Art McPhee, AMBS
Revisioning Youth Ministry
Abe Bergen, Canadian Mennonite Bible College
January 19-26
A weekend continuing education event, January 19-20, will correspond with this two-credit hour course which continues through the following week.
Women and Men Ministry Leadership: Colloquium
January 22-26
Janeen Bertsche Johnson, Erick Sawatzky, AMBS

For more information, contact Ruth Ann Gardner, registrar

Pastors' Week *January 29-February 1*

Recovering Spiritual Healing
Spiritual healing takes on fresh relevance and urgency today. Our congregations are embracing people who are growing older, people who are struggling against evil forces in our world, and people who are hungry for lives that are whole and meaningful. Come explore how Jesus approached healing with Walter Wink, well-known writer and lecturer, and June Keener Wink, an artist who focuses on integration of mind, body and spirit.

Presenters
Walter Wink, professor at Auburn Theological Seminary, and June Keener Wink, adjunct faculty member at Auburn Theological Seminary, New York City

Worship leaders
Rachel Miller Jacobs, Barbara Nelson Gingerich and James Nelson Gingerich, all of Goshen, Ind.

For more information, contact Diane Zaerr, 219 296-6222 or dzaerr@ambs.edu

Leadership Clinics *February 2*

Several in-depth clinics will be offered for pastors and church leaders. Specific sessions to be announced.

For more information, contact Diane Zaerr, 219 296-6222 or dzaerr@ambs.edu

AMBS Panorama

Professors achieve new rank

The AMBS board recently promoting the following: **Marlene Kropf,** D.Min., to Associate Professor of Spiritual Formation and Worship; **Mary Schertz,** Ph.D., to Professor of New Testament; **Walter Sawatzky,** Ph.D., to Professor of Church History.

Faculty honored for writings

In a May celebration, the following faculty were honored for recent scholarly work:
Karl Koop, Ph.D., *Early Seventeenth-Century Mennonite Confessions of Faith: The Development of an Anabaptist Tradition,* unpublished doctoral dissertation, fall 1999.
Walter Sawatzky, editor of *Mission Focus: Annual Review,* seventh volume published in late 1999, and *Religion in Eastern Europe,* vol. XX, No. 1, published February 2000.
Erland Waltner and J. Daryl Charles, *I & II Peter, Jude,* in the Believers Church Bible Commentary Series.

In addition, **Millard Lind,** professor emeritus, was acknowledged for book of essays published in his honor: *Peace and Justice Shall Embrace: Power and Theo-politics in the Bible,* edited by Loren L. Johns, new dean of AMBS, and Ted Grimsrud, published by Herald Press and Pandora Press U.S.

Upcoming Continuing Education events

The Art of Worship will explore choosing worship resources, reading scripture, selecting hymns, and using visual elements and movement in worship. The event, cosponsored with Amigo Centre, Sturgis, Mich., is scheduled for October 6-8. A preaching workshop for pastors will preceed the event on Friday, October 6.

By Another Road, a one-day seminar on planning for Advent, will feature Marlene Kropf and Karmen Fehr of AMBS, Thursday, October 19.

New journal coming

Vision: A Journal for Theology and Church will be published by AMBS and Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man., beginning this fall. The first issue will focus on spirituality with articles by Perry Yoder, Tom Yoder Neufeld, Harry Huebner, and Marlene Kropf, and others.

To subscribe, contact AMBS, 219 296-6239, or bngingerich@ambs.edu.

In Canada, contact CMBC, 204 888-6781, or gzerbe@mennonitechurch.ca.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos: Page 1 and graduate groups by J. Tyler Klassen; other photos pp. 3-7 by Mary E. Klassen

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Summer 2000

Associated
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Seminary

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http://www.ambs.edu

Honduran church fervent at age 50

1,500 gather for all-night anniversary celebration

SAN PEDRO SULA, Honduras—It started at 6:30 p.m. and didn't end until a Communion service was held at 4 the next morning—nearly 10 hours of worship to celebrate 50 years of Mennonite presence in Honduras.

An estimated 1,500 people gathered for the anniversary celebration on June 17, held in a Mennonite church in San Pedro Sula, the country's second-largest city. Pastors and members from all six regions of Iglesia Evangelica Menonita Honduras (IEMH), 10 former Eastern Mennonite Missions workers and a number of current EMM and Mennonite Central Committee workers were in attendance.

George and Grace Miller, the first EMM workers to Honduras, arrived in the village of Trujillo, on the country's northeastern coast, in 1950 and found intense poverty. So from the start, missionaries to Honduras proclaimed a gospel that responded to physical needs, including work in agriculture, health, education and community development.

From those beginnings, the IEMH today numbers 94 congregations and nearly 5,000 members.

The all-night celebration included participants from each IEMH region sharing music, drama, pantomime, dance and testimonies.

EMM photo by: Dale D. Gehman

Honduran Mennonite pastor Melvin Fernandez (right) and some 1,500 other people worship at an all-night celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Iglesia Evangelica Menonita Honduras June 17-18.

Former EMM workers Amzie Yoder and James Sauder gave challenges for the next millennium. Carlton Stambaugh, EMM board chair, and Jose Santiago, EMM representative to Latin America, added blessings and congratulations on behalf of the organization.—*Michael Weaver and Stephanie K. Hanna for EMM News Service*

Japanese man dreams of Mongolia work

KAMISHIHORO, Japan—For 40 years, Keisuke Matsumoto relived in his dreams the March 1945 bombings of Tokyo. Now as he nears retirement, he dreams of going to Mongolia as a mission worker to help street children.

The 10-day attack on Tokyo occurred when Matsumoto was 12 years old. "My house was safe. All 12 members of my family were safe," he says. "But I could have easily been an orphan, so I cannot help thinking about those kids in Mongolia."

Matsumoto, a member of Kamishihoro Mennonite Church, says people ask him why he would consider going to Mongolia instead of enjoying his retirement. "I had friends who were killed in the [Tokyo] bombing," he said. "I want to use my body as much as I can because I have another life in Jesus Christ."

Matsumoto's first exposure to other cultures came in 1974, when he joined a work camp in Bangladesh organized by Mennonite Central Committee. "My eyes were opened in Bangladesh," he says. "Now I know when we pray together, we are brothers and sisters. Asia is one."

Since then, Matsumoto has visited Nepal, Cambodia, Thailand and Mongolia. "I saw many Christian volunteer workers from Western countries, but very few from Japan," he says.

As he approaches retirement, he hopes he and his wife, Misaho, will be able to go to Mongolia. They are exploring options with his home congregation, the Japanese Mennonite Christian Church Conference, the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions.

But the Matsumotos have obligations at home to consider. Misaho cares for Keisuke's 98-year-old mother in their home because Keisuke is the eldest son in his family. Keisuke's mother and the rest of the family would need to agree about who would assume her care.

Still, Matsumoto holds on to his dream. He said he and his wife want to make a difference in the lives of street children, but they also know their lives will be changed.

"When Christians go out to other countries, particularly developing countries, we tend to think that we have better conditions and have to help the 'poor' people," Matsumoto says. "But we have to realize we can learn from them."—*Bethany Swope of GCMC and MBM news services*

Matsumoto

'Sacred pages' of Latin American women

After four years, first Bible study guide comes off

NEWTON, Kan.—It took twice as long as expected, but what is probably the first Spanish-language Bible study guide written by and for Latin American women in an Anabaptist context is now off the press.

Los Problemas Economicos Nos Agobian ... Juntas Podemas Salir! ("The Economic Problems Are Wearing Us Out ... Together We Can Make It!") was published in May and is being distributed to both Mennonites and other Christians.

The seeds for the project were planted as the result of a survey done by CLARA, the Center of Anabaptist Resources for Latin America, based in Bogotá, Colombia. Attempting to find out what congregational literature needs were greatest, CLARA staff discovered that material for use in women's groups ranked high.

Mennonite women's groups in Latin America are an active and important part of church life, says Janet Breneman, a long-time worker with Eastern Mennonite Missions in the region. As a professor at SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist seminary in Guatemala City, and as director of SEMILLA's Basic Education Department, which prepares educational materials for congregations and local Bible institutes, Breneman has long been aware of the lack of "creative material based in Scripture, that enables women to reflect on their own lives as Latin American women created in God's image."

In spring 1996, Elizabeth Soto, then a Commission on Overseas Mission worker who was director of CLARA, met with Breneman and Guatemalan Mennonite Olga Piedrasanta to talk about making Bible study material for women in the Latin America churches a reality.

"This fit into the kind of work I was doing and wanted to do at SEMILLA," Breneman says.

The three women's original plan called for the first booklet, focused on economic issues, to be completed by September 1997. "This makes me laugh now," Breneman says. "It feels like we were really naive and hardly knew what we were doing. I don't think any of us had ever written a book or such a study guide before, much less guided other writers in the task."

The plan also called for the guide to be a collaboration of women from different parts of Latin America. Meeting that goal proved difficult as well, says Breneman. In the end, four of the six writers were from Guatemala. The exceptions were Breneman and Soto, a native of Puerto Rico who now lives in Pennsylvania.

GCMC

Left to right: Janet Breneman, Rosario de Rojas and Alba de Escobar, three of the writers of the new Latin American women's Bible study guide.

"Our writers weren't trained writers nor from a writing culture," Breneman says, "so writing didn't come easily for most of them. Consequently, we had lots of guiding to do and lots of editing and revising. We didn't take into account how much time it would require."

As the manuscripts began to arrive in the spring of 1998, Breneman says she was afraid of what she would find. "But as I read, I felt a swell of amazement and humility," she says. "This was precious, hard-worked material created out of the writers' years of experiences guiding Bible study in women's groups, crying and praying with each other in desperate situations, working on individual and cooperative income-raising initiatives. I felt that the pages in my hand were sacred."

Women in Mission of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church's Women's Missionary and Service Commission (now integrated as Mennonite Women) gave $3,200 for publishing costs.

Now the task is to distribute the material. Breneman says books have been sold to both Mennonites and other Christians. "For instance, we recently received an email from the Catholic Archbishop's Human Rights Office in Guatemala, saying they had gotten a copy of the booklet and had used it with good success. They wondered if we had any more materials prepared on other topics, and listed a whole series of possible topics. That was an encouraging word."

A meeting is scheduled for later this month to discuss more study guides. Breneman says the next booklet will probably focus on violence against women.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

School to support home schoolers

Mennonite Collegiate Institute, a high school in Gretna, Man., is reaching out to home schoolers. MCI's board recently decided to offer support services for home-schooling families.

Southern Manitoba has about 400 students, many from Mennonite homes, who are not studying in a public or private school.

Last Christmas and Easter, MCI made its gym and chapel available for special events for home-schooled students. Now the school wants to provide weekly times for those students to use science and computer labs and the library.

Principal Paul Kroeker hopes that providing such support in a Christian context will help home schoolers. "We think we are in a position where we can begin to establish some trust with these families," he says. —*Canadian Mennonite*

Correction: The Indonesian church struggling with divisions over national independence is the Dutch Reformed-related GKI Synod, not the Mennonite JKI Synod, as reported in the July 4 issue.

Immigrants to California have MCC workers' help

REEDLEY, Calif.—With her two young children beside her, Manuela sits in a folding chair under a shade tree in her front yard. She speaks in a quiet voice as she compares her life in the United States with the one she and her children had in Mexico, just five months earlier. Though they are now living in poverty by U.S. standards, Manuela is happy.

"In Mexico, we would go hungry for a week," she says. "I like it here because we can work."

Manuela's experience is not unusual. Workers in the West Coast Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) office in Reedley hear stories like hers almost every day.

"In this immediate area, there are many immigrants and undocumented people," says Mary Elizondo, a West Coast MCC worker. "How do we as a church in the Central Valley reach out to them?"

The region's economy is driven mostly by farming. Much of the labor employed in the fields and packing sheds comes from Mexico. One misconception is that the immigrants come to the United States to receive public assistance, Elizondo says. Instead, they come to provide for their families, earning money to send back to Mexico.

"They can earn three to four times more working in the fields in California than as a bank manager or school teacher," says Miriam Cardenas, an immigration specialist with West Coast MCC. "I hear people call them lazy. That is so untrue. They work eight to 10 hours a day in hard, physical labor."

As a child, Cardenas emigrated from Mexico. Her parents worked in the fields of central California, and she joined them in the summers. Now Cardenas helps immigrants apply for legal residency and citizenship.

"If it takes helping them through the paperwork, driving them to the immigration office and putting them in line, that's what we will do," Cardenas says.

But the responsibility of helping immigrants doesn't fall only to West Coast MCC. "I would like the churches to embrace immigrants as their brothers and sisters," Elizondo says.

She suggests that congregations provide classes in English and parenting, raise awareness of immigration issues, provide for newcomers' physical needs and help them through the documentation process.

"Jesus said that when we feed the hungry, care for the sick or invite the stranger in, we are dong this for him," says Bob Buxman, MCC West Coast director. "That's what I am about if I am a Christian."—*Carmen Andres for Meetinghouse*

David Fast

The good race

Freeman Hershberger of Goshen, Ind., leads Mel Yoder of Lenexa, Kan., in the 5K race during the second Mennonite Senior Sports Classic June 29-July 1 in Goshen. About 100 people between the ages of 50 and 95 participated in 14 events, such as swimming, racquetball and horseshoes. The classic was sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite Association of Retired Persons and Goshen College.

Taiwan Mennonites to start encouraging alternative service

TAIPEI, Taiwan—The Taiwanese government's recent decision to implement alternatives to military service has received the support of the Fellowship of Mennonite Churches in Taiwan (FOMCIT).

FOMCIT had previously concentrated on evangelism and medical service and asked its members not to refuse compulsory military service, said FOMCIT chair Ong Sek-Sin. But now Mennonite congregations will begin to "formally guide and encourage church members to apply for alternative service as a substitute for military obligations," Sek-Sin says.

The government's new policy allows young men to do noncombatant medical service in the military or social services such as elder care and fighting fires.—*GCMC News Service*

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by the way ...

Of the 3,617 credentialed ministers in the integrated binational Mennonite Church, nearly a fourth (858) are retired.

MCC thrift shops get computer savvy

LITITZ, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) thrift stores receive many donated items. But at a workshop in Lititz last month, store staff and volunteers explored selling some of those items on the popular online auction site E-bay.

"We often receive books and other items that we know are valuable," said Marlene Liechty of Crowded Closet thrift store in Iowa City, Iowa. "So using the Internet is something we are very interested in. I don't know much about it yet, but this is going to be exciting."

More than 140 staff and volunteers from 52 shops in the United States and Canada attended the workshop. In 1999, thrift shops contributed $5 million to MCC's national and overseas programs.—*MCC News Service*

Longtime AMBS professor dies at 79

ELKHART, Ind.—Gertrude Roten, who taught at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, from 1966 to 1989, died July 10 at her home in Elkhart. She turned 79 in May and had been in declining health.

Roten was professor emerita of Greek and New Testament. Until recently she had been working out of her AMBS office writing a Bible commentary and her memoirs.

Her husband, Paul, who served as librarian at AMBS, died in 1979. She is survived by a son and a daughter and several grandchildren. A memorial service was held July 14 in AMBS's Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount.

EMU vice president appointed provost

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg turned to its own administrative staff to find its new provost. Beryl Brubaker, EMU's vice president for six years, was named to the position on July 3.

Brubaker starts on short notice. Rick Maclin of St. Louis was to have become provost on July 1. But last month he withdrew because of a recently diagnosed serious vision problem.

Brubaker has been at EMU since 1970, serving as a professor and administrator in the nursing department before becoming vice president for enrollment.

New congregational publishing director named

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—Rose Stutzman has been named director of Herald Press Congregational Publishing, a new position overseeing the curriculum, periodicals and church supplies produced by Herald Press and Faith & Life Press. The two operations are in the process of merging.

Stutzman, who has been with Herald Press since 1995, will start her new position Aug. 1. She previously had been an editor of children's curriculum.

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Events

Casselman River Amish and Mennonite Historians annual meeting, Sept. 15-16, at Maple Glen Mennonite Church, Grantsville, Md. Call 301-895-4488.

Puerto Rico Conference meeting, Sept. 16, Aibonito, Puerto Rico.

Oklahoma Convention, Sept. 16-17, Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla.

Mennonite Disaster Service Region IV meeting, Sept. 23. Contact Wilmer Leichty, 541-928-8294.

Workers

Gingerich, Michael, Millersville, Pa., began May 1 as program administrator for Discipleship Ministries of Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Tatman, Nathan, began June 26 as youth pastor at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.

Births

Bender, Simon Joel, June 29, to Jacqueline and Tim Bender, Tavistock, Ont.

Brockmueller, Ryan Ken, April 26, to Lisa (Lawrence) and Myles Brockmueller, Freeman, S.D.

Claassen, Kyler Scott, May 9, to Amy (Jost) and Bruce Claassen, Hesston, Kan.

Cooper, Anne Hope, June 16, to Anne (Raper) and David Cooper, Raleigh, N.C.

Graber, Christian Robert, April 30, to Julie (Kramer) and Kendall Graber, Humbolt, Iowa.

Haggerty, Brennan Loren, May 9, to Dan and Heather (Kaufman) Haggerty, Freeman, S.D.

Klassen, Greta Lapp, June 7, to Dale Klassen and Beverly Lapp, Goshen, Ind.

Lehn, Noah Matthew, June 27, to Cindy (Stauffer) and Matt Lehn, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Marriott, Jaris Riley, June 13, to Kristi (Wagler) and Steve Marriott, Shakespeare, Ont.

Martin, Charis Ileana, May 26, to Heather (Moretz) and Robert Martin, Gilbertsville, Pa.

Mast, Hannah Elizabeth, June 18, to Craig and Jessica (Mumaw) Mast, Topeka, Ind.

Reimer, Elena Meyer, April 29, to Kathy and Paul Meyer Reimer, Goshen, Ind.

Saylor, Isaac Daniel, June 14, to Kelly and Tonya (Wert) Saylor, Manheim Pa.

Showalter, Austin Dean, June 18, to Christopher and Laura (Berkey) Showalter, Harrisonburg, Va.

Stancato, Dillon Matthew, June 17, to Kimberly (Eller) and Philip Stancato, Quakertown, Pa.

Suderman, Leighton Jonathon, June 16, to Kelly and Lisa (Wagler) Suderman, Tavistock, Ont.

Yingling, Nicholas David, June 21, to David and Karen (Honsaker) Yingling, Hollidaysburg, Pa.

Yoder, Lee Wayne, June 22, to Connie (Maska) and Stuart Yoder, Omaha, Neb.

Marriages

Benroth/Clevidence: Lindsay Benroth, Bluffton, Ohio, and Gary Clevidence, Mount Cory, Ohio, June 17 at United Methodist Church, Mount Cory.

Brown/Buller: Lauretta Brown and Jess Buller, Henderson, Neb., June 10 at Evangelical Free Church, Grant, Neb.

Clements/Hilty: Ryan Clements, Mount Blanchard, Ohio, and Andrea Hilty, Pandora, Ohio, June 17 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Detweiler/Stauffer: Robert Detweiler, Tyrone, Pa., and Dorothy Hershey Stauffer, Woodbury, Pa., May 27.

Funnell/Stuckey: Tad Funnell, Edon, Ohio, and Glenda Stuckey, West Unity, Ohio, June 3 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Gatchel/Lehman: Stacey Gatchel, Marion, Ohio, and Joshua Lehman, Orrville, Ohio, May 20 at Cable Road Alliance Church, Lima, Ohio.

Hildebrand/Wenger: Gina Hildebrand, Salina, Kan., and Clark Wenger, Ottawa, Kan., April 29 at Christ Cathedral, Salina.

Martin/Rohrer: Chad Martin, Lancaster, Pa., and Julie Rohrer, Lancaster, June 24 at Lord's House of Prayer, Lancaster.

Meyer/Riegsecker: Richard Meyer, Napoleon, Ohio, and Jennifer Riegsecker, Wauseon, Ohio, July 1 at Las Vegas.

Miller/Ross: Andrew Miller, Dalton, Ohio, and Lizbeth Ross, Dalton, May 13 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Nolt/Swannick: Brad Nolt, Souderton, Pa., and Susan Swannick, Quakertown, Pa., July 1.

Petitte/Taylor: Ron Petitte, Dalton, Ohio, and Laura Taylor, Kidron, Ohio, June 10 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron.

Rutter/Stuckey: Teneesa Rutter, Stryker, Ohio, and David Stuckey, Pioneer, Ohio, June 24 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker.

Deaths

Basinger, Bertha, 87, Orrville, Ohio, died June 21. Parents: Elias and Elizabeth Basinger (deceased). Funeral: June 26 at Kidron, Ohio.

Erb, Lois Taylor, 81, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 20 of lung cancer. Spouse: Wilbur Erb. Parents: Edgar and Verna Taylor (deceased). Other survivors: children David, James, Paul, Philip, Joyce Brunk, Merle Mast, Connie Madden; 12 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 24 at Steelton (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hilty, Walden, 93, Bluffton, Ohio, died June 6 of injuries from a car accident. Spouse: Wilma Steiner Hilty (deceased) Parents: Christian and Anna Gilliom Hilty (deceased). Survivors: children David, Elizabeth Yacubian; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 9 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora, Ohio.

Kandel, Alma Sommers, 91, Sugarcreek, Ohio, died June 18. Spouse: Daniel Kandel (deceased). Parents: Manasses and Alta Gerber Sommers (deceased). Survivors: children Glenn, Robert, Durlan, Clarence, Nancy Schneider, Minnie Riffle; 16 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: June 21 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Kennel, Earl, 76, Monmouth, Ore., died June 25. Spouse: Jewell Garber Nissly Kennel. Parents: John and Anna Kennel (deceased). Other survivors: children Dwight, Robert, John, Kathleen Schweitzer, Ardiss Burch; stepsons Christopher Nissly and Jonathan Nissly; 14 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 29 at Nazarene Church, Corvallis, Ore.

Lehman, Jeanette Schumacher, 85, Pandora, Ohio, died June 8. Spouse: Francis Lehman (deceased). Parents: Wilbert and Hulda Suter Schumacher (deceased). Survivors: children Larry, James, Nola Beach, Anita Stratton; 14 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: June 13 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Lemburg, Jack, 62, Wayland, Iowa, died June 2 of cancer. Spouse: Josephine Lemburg. Parents: Harvey and Bernice Lemburg (deceased). Funeral: June 13 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Miller, Ena Sommers, 66, Bunker Hill, Ind., died June 17 from a car accident. Spouse: Wilbur Miller. Parents: Mose and Anna Yoder Sommers (deceased). Other survivors: children Jerry, David, Stanley, Marcia Pretzer; 14 grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo, Ind.

Miller, Verlin Dean, 30, Sarasota, Fla., died June 22. Parents: Gary and Martha Miller. Funeral: June 26 at Bayshore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Rhodes, Harley Edward, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 19. Spouse: Alta Wenger Rhodes. Parents: William and Vesta Rhodes (deceased). Other survivors: children James, Allen, Barbara Eshleman; seven grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Center, Harrisonburg.

Ritchey, Herbert, 59, Woodbury, Pa., died June 18 of leukemia. Spouse: Joan Ritchey. Parents: Paul (deceased) and Pearl Ritchey. Other survivors: children Eric, Lincoln, Patrick; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Woodbury.

Short, Larry, 54, Archbold, Ohio, died June 18. Spouse: Suzette Short. Parents: Jesse and Lucille Short. Other survivors: children Anthony, Tamara Shumaker, Tara; three grandchildren. Funeral: June 22 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Siebert, Rudy Lee, 66, Halstead, Kan., died June 19 of a heart attack. Spouse: Karen Keller Siebert. Parents: Cornelius and Frieda Friesen Siebert (deceased). Other survivors: children Annette Siebert Lamp, Mark, Karen; two grandchildren. Funeral: June 23 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Smith, Marlyss Siebert, 67, Henderson, Neb., died June 17. Spouse: Alfred Smith. Parents: Albert and Agnes Siebert (deceased). Other survivors: children Gwendolyn Trim, Barbara Senff; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 20 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Wagler, Beatrice Yantzi, 67, Tavistock, Ont., died June 22. Spouse: Leander Wagler. Parents: Aaron (deceased) and Fannie Mae Yantzi. Other survivors: children Karen Wirth, Nancy Lebold, Wanda Martin, Sheila Martin, Mark; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: June 26 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock.

Yoder, Mabel, 75, Harrisonburg, Va., died June 21. Parents: Levi and Hettie Anna Harshbarger Yoder (deceased). Memorial service: July 1 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

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classifieds

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- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** is seeking a ***director of assisted living***. This is a new position. Prior long-term care or personal care experience preferred. RN preferred. Should have current license as Personal Care Administrator or be willing to obtain. Must have good written and verbal communication skills and be able to work in collaboration with all disciplines.

  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543 or call 717-581-3936.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a multiracial, inner-city elementary school, is seeking full-time ***3rd/4th and 5th/6th-grade teachers*** and a part-time ***computer instructor***. Begin Aug. 14, 2000. Contact Myrna Miller, Assistant Principal, 773-735-9304; email <myrna@infolaunch.com>.

- **Friendship Community**, Lititz, Pa., is actively seeking applicants for the ***program supervisor*** position. If you are interested in assisting adults with mental disabilities, call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466 ext. 102; email <amy.horst@friendshipcomm.org>. Christian mission. EOE

- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** is seeking an ***administrative assistant*** to the pastoral care team. Responsibilities include planning and scheduling programs for chapels, and significant amounts of telephone and correspondence work. Requires word processing skills.

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- **Landis Homes Retirement Community** has ***LPN opportunities*** in the Heritage Center for people with memory loss and in our skilled care area. Enjoy a friendly, family-oriented environment. Hours include full-time 3-11 or 11-7 and part-time 7-3 or 3-11. Positions in the Heritage Center include involvement in programming and hands-on care for 13 to 16 residents.

  Contact Human Resources, Landis Homes, 1001 E. Oregon Rd., Lititz, PA 17543 or call 717-581-3936.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, Akron, Pa., is actively recruiting for a ***human resources manager***. Qualifications include a degree in business or a related field, experience in human resources management, knowledge of human resources law, strong communication skills and experience in conflict management.

  For more information, please contact Sherrie Ober at 717-859-8117; email <smo@villages-mcc.org>.

- **Foothills Mennonite Church**, Calgary, Alberta, seeks a full-time ***associate pastor***. Our hope is that the associate pastor, along with parents, church leaders and the wider congregation, will create a nurturing environment where children and youth are encouraged and challenged to commit to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a lifelong service to his church. We seek a person with a growing and visible faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior who is committed to the church as expressed in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

  For more information, please contact Pastor Search Committee, 2115 Urbana Rd. NW, Calgary, AB T2N 4B9; 403-289-7172; fax 403-210-2209; email <FoothillsMennonite@attglobal.net>.

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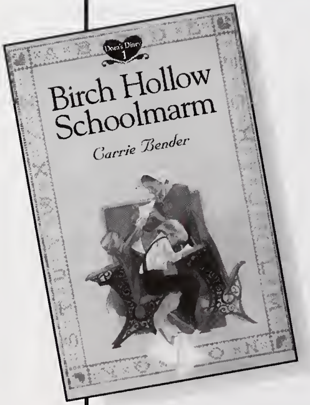

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by Gordon Houser

Until I decided to write something about it, I was not among the more than 23 million Americans each week who watch *Survivor*, CBS's phenomenally popular TV show. I decided to watch at least one episode in order to have a better idea of what it's about.

Frankly, I had to force myself to keep watching. I found it boring, tedious and a bit insulting. Perhaps that's why many people who admit to watching it act guilty. One friend said, "I hate to admit it, but I find it fascinating."

Our culture often looks to such venues to find some excitement, as if we'd rather live vicariously through these temporary islanders than live our real lives.

I'm guilty as well. Standing in line this summer for more than an hour to ride the world's tallest and fastest roller coaster, I thought, What does this say about the state of our civilization? I guess we all need some kind of thrill to take us beyond our everyday lives. Or at least we think we do.

For those few of you who haven't watched *Survivor* or read about it, thousands of people volunteered to live on a deserted island in the South China Sea for up to 39 days. From those thousands of applicants, producers chose 16 people, whom they divided into two groups, or tribes. These tribes compete with each other in various contests related to island survival (such as eating rats and throwing spears). The tribe that loses must then vote off one of its members. Eventually one is left, and that person wins $1 million.

One of the arguments for such a show is that it shows us what life is like. There is some truth to this. My friend disliked the fact that women, the elderly and people of color were the first to be voted off. That certainly reflects reality to some degree. But why watch it? Why not talk to women, older folks and people of color and listen to what they experience in everyday life?

Some have compared *Survivor* to the gladiator games of ancient Rome. Although violence is not allowed on the show, the idea that one person survives is similar. I'd sooner call it a Darwinian approach: survival of the fittest, though fittest is relative. Rather than being the strongest, the winner may well be the most devious. What a wonderful lesson!

This isn't reality but manufactured reality. The competition is not only built-in but encouraged. Rather than serve as a cautionary show about the destructiveness of individualism and the need to get along, *Survivor* promotes teamwork only to the point of having to vote a team member off the island. Then it's everyone for him- or herself. While it's not as staged as professional wrestling, it carries the same idea.

This and other shows like it are products of our celebrity culture, in which many of us want to be celebrities so much that we're willing to make fools of ourselves in front of a national audience. In *Life the Movie: How Entertainment Conquered Reality*, Neal Gabler writes that "reality has become the greatest entertainment of all."

Whether or not we watch such shows and regardless of how harmful they are to our souls, many of us need to get a life and attend to more important things than watching someone eat a rat.

Darwinian reality? Participants in the TV show *Survivor*

Time

films

Dinosaur (PG) tells a fairly predictable story, but it also teaches some valuable moral lessons about caring for everyone, including the weakest.

Chicken Run (PG) is a hilarious claymation story from a British team of filmmakers. It may make you pause before eating your next chicken wing.

The Perfect Storm (PG-13) is based on a true story of a fishing boat that encounters the convergence of three major weather systems in 1991. Greed and Mother Nature prove deadly.

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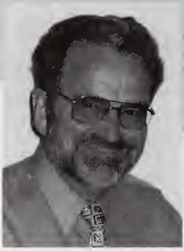


J. Lorne Peachey

Mennonite Church (2):

Where are we going?

The God who loved us so lavishly to give us a great past continues to love us so deeply to grant us a wonderful future.

Now it may stretch credulity to compare the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC) with the children of Israel. But if a new, merged, transformed Mennonite Church isn't the promised land, at least going into it should bring some of the same excitement Israel must have felt camped on the borders of Canaan.

Like Israel, we can also know that the God who loved us in the past will be with us in our future. "The Lord did not choose you and lavish love on you because you were larger or greater than [others]," Moses told Israel. "It was simply because the Lord loves you" (Deuteronomy 7:7-8).

What will be the future of this church that God so lavishly loves? I suspect we GCs and MCs will soon get to know each other well if we mimic this love. Then the differences that once loomed large will have little meaning, and together we can face new challenges that our future will bring us.

1. We will be challenged to take our place in the global Mennonite family. So far the rest of the Mennonite world has been mostly patient with us in North America as we've focused on merger this past decade. Once integration is complete, we will need to join our sisters and brothers in other countries to explore what it means to be more faithful disciples.

It won't be easy. In this issue, Larry Miller of Mennonite World Conference says North American Mennonites "have little felt need" for the rest of the world church. He believes that will change, however, as we face more turmoil in North American society. Then we may learn we need to listen to those who have preceded us through similar difficulties.

Becoming global Mennonites will mean coming to terms with being a minority as North Americans. Today the majority of Mennonites lives in Africa, Asia and Latin America. How will we respond when this new majority decides on definitions of Anabaptism that do not agree with our traditional understandings?

2. We will be challenged to become a more ecumenical church. To continue to make an impact on our society, we will need to give up our isolationism, our feelings of superiority and our hesitation to work with others. As other religions become more vocal and aggressive, as our culture continues to become more secular, Mennonites will need to join with other Christians for effective witness and service.

Our partnerships will need to go many ways. There are a host of conservative groups from whom we can learn a great deal in their concern for purity and faithfulness. We already work with many of these in Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Disaster Service. Dare we dream about cooperating in outreach, maybe even in education?

At the same time, we must look to other groups that we call liberal, groups that attempt to demonstrate the love of God by being more inclusive. Dare we dream about being more closely connected with them, working together to search out the disenfranchised and minister more effectively to "the least of these"? This was Jesus' criteria for being part of the new kingdom (Matthew 25:40).

3. We will be challenged to live out our faith in whatever form our culture takes. As in the past, we will need to think long and hard about what of our world to embrace and what to challenge.

We cannot predict what kind of world this will be. There are hints it could become more hostile and less accommodating toward people of faith. We have faced that before and have lessons from our history in how to respond.

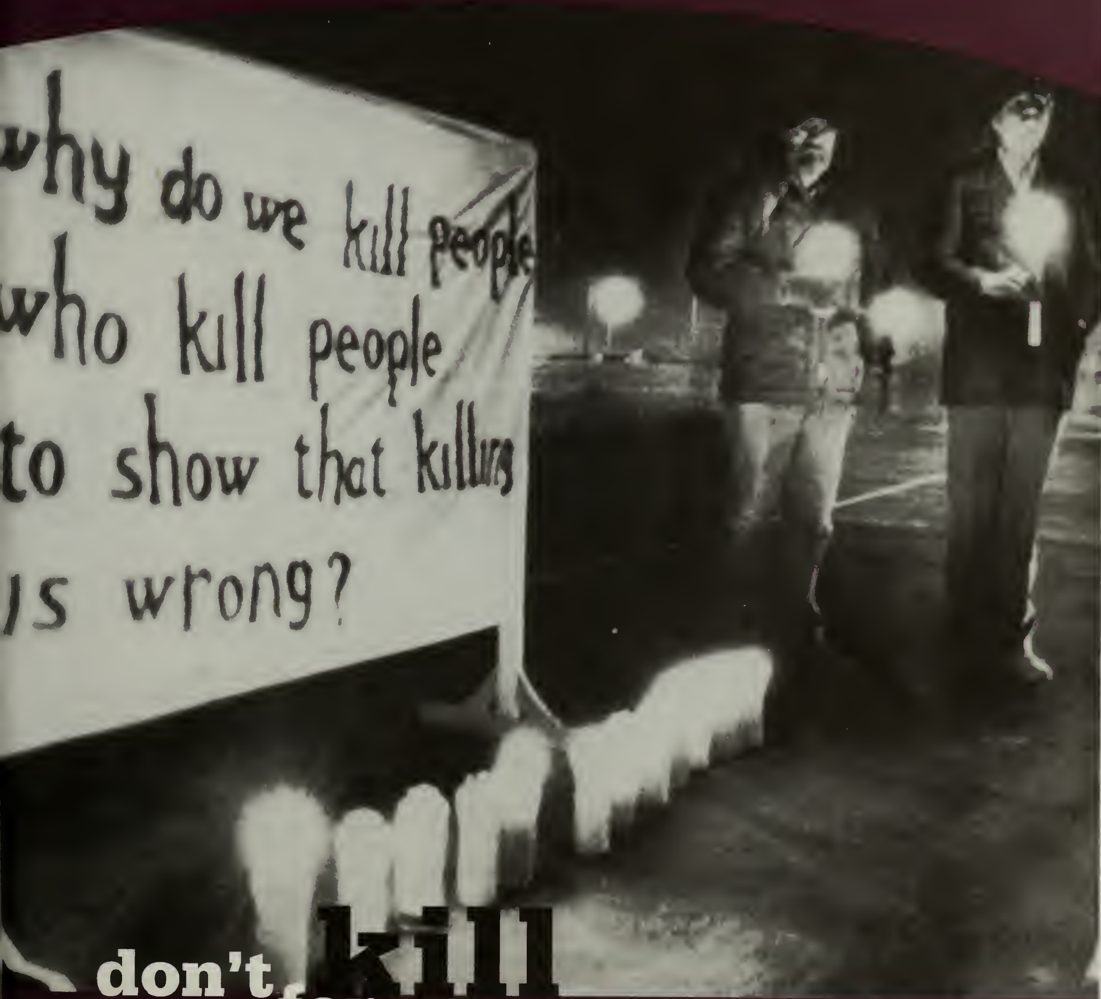
But our society could become even more accommodating, allowing us more freedom, caring less about what we do. Here is the greater danger. Faced with a similar prospect for the children of Israel, Moses warned: "Beware that in your plenty you do not forget the Lord your God. … For when you become full and prosperous, … that is the time to be careful" (Deuteronomy 8:11,12,14).

Being careful is relying on God, whatever our future. Fear God, live according to God's will, love and worship God with all your heart and soul, and obey God's commands. These were Moses' words to Israel on the eve of entering the promised land (Deuteronomy 10:12,13).

These are good words for GCs and MCs as we become the new Mennonite Church. The God who loved us so lavishly to give us a great past continues to love us so deeply to grant us a wonderful future.—*jlp*

the Mennonite

July 25, 2000


why do we kill people
who kill people
to show that killing
is wrong?

don't kill for us

page 4

6 José's execution
8 Schrag named U.S. executive director
9 Colombian pastor forced to leave his home
16 Editing through 'interesting' times

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Transformation affirmation

I appreciated Jim Schrag's forthright thoughts on transformation ("Why I Keep Working at Transformation," July 11). To Jim and other individuals involved in the transformation process, thank you. Yours is, at times, a difficult task, and I suspect that those of us not directly participating complain too much, affirm too little and pray not enough.—*Ruben Chupp, Wayland, Iowa*

Communication the key

I very much enjoyed John Rempel's article "Do You Promise to Follow Jesus, the Lamb?" (July 4). I appreciate his challenge that as pacifists, Mennonites must publicly and boldly uphold principles of nonresistance and exhibit love for their aggressors. Our peace conviction is something very important to cling to. Yet I share less his suggestion that the last 50 years have shown a "movement toward nonviolence" among many nonpacifist churches. There have been commendable moments of coming together, to be sure, but fundamental differences still abound. The importance lies most in the willingness for pacifist and nonpacifists to communicate.

Perhaps the greatest convergence of pacifist-nonpacifist Christian circles was the Puidoux Conferences of 1955 to 1962 in Europe. At these historic meetings, Historic Peace Church and Mennonite theological giants such as John Howard Yoder and Harold Bender met with nonpacifist theologians sympathetic to pacifist viewpoints to discuss what the proper response of Christians to war ought to be. The meetings were indeed historic but not only because nonpacifists merely wanted to listen to what pacifists had to say (this was the first time in more than 400 years that Mennonites had formally met with Reformation churches). It was equally important, mostly among Mennonites, that the young HPC representatives in Europe stepped out of their churches' marginalization and self-imposed withdrawal from the messy affiars of church and state to actively help shape how all Christians should behave in times of armed conflict.

The nonpacifist circles did not renounce their just war beliefs. The pacifists did not condone participation in war. The same still seems to be the case. In order for Christians to gain any common understanding of their participation in war, the opposing views of rigid idealism against conflict and practical participation in it must lay down their stubborn shields and simply talk. It is in constructive dialogue that healthy relationships can be built.—*Andre King, Lancaster, Pa.*

Biblical tragedy

In the July 4 issue, a letter by Hartzel Schmidt succinctly sets forth my own view of Scripture. I hold this view because it makes sense to me. However, I recognize that many Christians hold a very different view of the Bible. I respect their right to their viewpoint. I only ask that my right to my viewpoint also be respected.

Schmidt writes, "Thus to use proof texts in the Bible to determine whether a particular action or lifestyle is sin is questionable at best." I would add, "and tragic at worst."

I have been a member of College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., for more than 20 years. As long as I can remember, we have had a woman or women in positions of leadership. One of the women on the ministerial team, Nancy Kauffmann, recently resigned after serving on the team for 19 years.

Thank God that today there are women serving in positions of leadership throughout the Mennonite church. What a tragedy it would have been if our denomination had decided that since Paul wrote that women not be used in leadership positions, we were compelled to continue that practice today.—*Richard Hostetler, Goshen, Ind.*

How should we react?

Thank you for the excellent editorial "Coming to Terms With Our Red, White and Blue Dilemmas" (July 4). With the possible exception of World War I, this nation has treated us very well. At the same time, the United States has generally ignored our convictions.

So how should we react? Should we make common cause with the liberal political correctness of the maintream Protestant church in hopes of being noticed? I was glad to read J. Daryl Byler's explanation that Mennonite Central Committee did not sign the death penalty letter because it did not represent MCC's views (Readers Say, July 4).—*John M. Eby, Pennsville, N.J.*

Time of death

The belief that the earth is billions of years old can never be a viable option for Bible-believing Christians. We know from the genealogical records in the Scriptures the approximate age of humankind, which can only be several thousands of years old. The foundation for our

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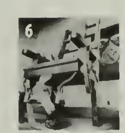

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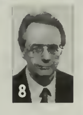

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readers say

understanding the rest of the Bible rests on how we interpret the first few chapters in Genesis, and to say that the earth is billions of years old erodes that foundation. To say that the earth is billions of years old because of the fossil record, which shows millions of dead things buried in rock layers all over the earth, is to say that there were millions of animals which died billions of years ago.

Should this be a problem for Christians who believe the Bible? Absolutely, for to say that the earth is billions of years old is to say that there was death, disease, sickness and suffering before Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden. This clearly contradicts the New Testament teaching in Romans 5:12-14, which says that death came by sin, and we clearly understand that to be Adam's sin. Romans 5:14 says that death reigned "from the time of Adam." And it is stretching the point to claim that Romans 5 is only speaking of spiritual death, for the New Testament elsewhere speaks of the whole creation waiting for redemption from the curse of sin and death.

Science is incredibly helpful in our understanding of our universe but only as far as it supports God's account of our world. Was there death before Adam? Not according to the Bible. If we cannot believe the Bible as to when death came into the world, how can we believe the Bible as to how to overcome the power of death?—*Fred Kanagy, Bloomfield, Mont.*

Correction

In Dave Graber's letter in the July 4 issue, I believe he meant to say that Peter's message from the Holy Spirit came to him on Simon the tanner's housetop, rather than Cornelius'. See Acts 10:5,6,9ff.—*Ruth L. Burkholder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Cover photo
by Religious News Service

Don't kill for us

We witness to all people that violence, including capital punishment, is not the will of God.
—Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective

by David Whettstone

Intentionally or inadvertently through effective practice of our theology or mere presence, we hold governments accountable to the gospel.

An important, recurring theme in the Bible is that God desires to break the cycle of violence between individuals, communities and nations.

Genesis attests that violence and chaos are noticeable parts of the earliest chapters of human history. After Cain's calculated murder of Abel, the consequences for Cain are grave. Separation from familiar people who offered safety, disruption of a fruitful relationship with the land, loss of communion with God, and dread that one's life might be taken by others are all ensuing fears.

Yet immediately there is mercy. The community impact of murder is not overlooked. God places a mark on Cain as a sign for protection and declares a sevenfold vengeance on anyone who kills Cain.

Cain's story continues with the birth of a son, Enoch. A descendant comes by way of Enoch: Lamech, who also has killed a man. In his case, the admonition to his killer is a vengeance "seventy-sevenfold." Life goes on, but civilization is still infused with violence and blood feuds. "And the earth was filled with violence" (Genesis 6:11).

While many passages in the Old Testament at least indicate that capital punishment is permitted, it is not easy to know whether such texts are describing what happened or expressing God's ultimate desires and means for justice. Often death penalty proponents cite Genesis 9:6a: "Whoever sheds the blood of a human, by a human shall that person's blood be shed." Yet the same verse concludes, "for in his own image God made humankind" (9:6b).

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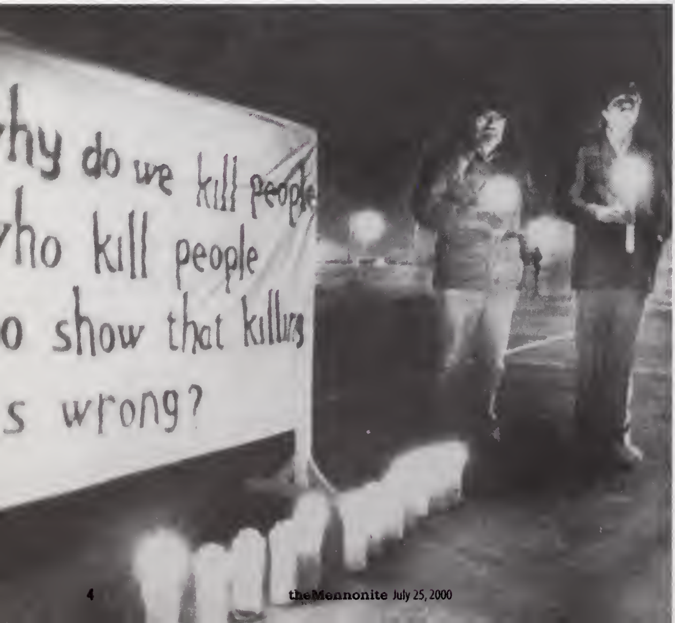


This verse from God's post-Flood covenant with Noah may be a transition. Here we must sit with God's call for sacrificial reckoning while traveling the connection to a call to fill the Earth with life.

A limitation on retaliation: There is an overarching principle regarding capital punishment in the Old Testament. God is conducting a continuing struggle to reduce violence in world. In a land of wandering, fighting peoples, the dictum "Life for life, eye for eye" (Exodus 21:23, 24) offered a limitation on retaliation. This restriction may have been the necessary mandate for a community that was maturing into a society. It is also instruction that can right an imbalance and obtain peaceful relationships with God and each other. Allowance of the death penalty did not deny God—who had singular claims to vengeance (Deuteronomy 32:35 and Leviticus 19:18)—acts of mercy and pardon.

Mercy is also extended and fulfilled in the New Testament. Jesus was both judge and subject of capital cases. In John 8, a woman caught in adultery is brought before Jesus at the temple. Invoking Mosaic law, scribes and Pharisees demand her death—a penalty applicable to both parties of adultery. Jesus provoked the accusers to reflect on their own blamelessness, i.e., sinful condition. Then he pardoned the accused.

Christ's own death betrays the deficiencies of the legal system of his time. Subject to ambiguous charges fitted to social and political circumstances, he was unfairly substituted for the death sentence of the murderer Barabbas. Yet his response was to ask for forgiveness of those who mistreated and killed him.

Appeals to the notion that governing authorities have permission to use the death penalty are made on the basis of Romans 13:4. The reference to "sword," however, is a symbol of the authority—not a means of punishment—to preserve safety and order. It was not the weapon of choice for Rome to carry out executions. Neither are the conditions of the "good" that

Every witness we make has to be mindful of victims. We need to have active compassion. It's amazing that parents who have lost a loved one, such as [the parents of] Matthew Shepard, speak so strongly for not taking another life. —*Karl Shelly, pastor at Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.*

authorities are called to uphold articulated here.

Paul concluded Romans 13 with a higher calling: to practice love of neighbor as one would love self. Intentionally or inadvertently through effective practice of our theology or mere presence, we hold governments accountable to the gospel. This may be particularly true in a democracy. Whether by specific word or silence, the values of the coming yet present reign of God permeate our world.

Overt efforts or words of public witness may be a big stretch for some people. "We are generally comfortable with direct service, but for many, public witness is a new thing," says Andre Gingerich Stoner, a pastor at Kern Road Mennonite Church in South Bend, Ind. "One person in our congregation compared it to the wilderness experience of John the Baptist."

Efforts both public and private do have an effect. "Over the years, whenever there is an execution in our state," says Andre, "Homer Nissley, a longtime member, stands up and says simply: 'This week, in your name and in my name, the state of Indiana will again execute someone.' This has kept this issue before us as a congregation and prepared us to respond more actively when we were faced with a specific situation locally."

Members of the congregation gave leadership to public prayer vigils and running anti-death penalty petition ads in *The South Bend Tribune*. With a comparable effort in Goshen, Ind., some pastors were subject to strong objections from the public.

People also respond positively. "People walk up to our table and are supportive ... writing 30 to 40 letters at any one time," says Tim Nafziger, who is part of the Goshen College Pax Club. Through activities with other abolitionists, students enjoy cross-generational support from the local Seniors for Peace.

Uncomfortable inquiries: Eastern Mennonite University Peace Fellowship, Harrisonburg, Va., has held campus vigils against the death penalty for the last two years. More than 130 other students join them on the day of an execution in wearing blue T-shirts that state, "Don't kill for me." This statement has provoked conversations in supermarkets and elsewhere—eliciting uncomfortable inquiries, desires to seek more understanding, offers of support or the need to think more about the issue.

The New Testament testifies that Jesus died for us sinners (Romans 5 and Hebrews 10) so that we might live. His death is an atonement for all (1 John 2:1-2). Jesus' Sermon on the Mount reminds us that not only deeds but words and thoughts—insults and anger—are tantamount to murder. This word follows the Beatitudes' call to be merciful and to be peacemakers.

"An essential part of this work needs to focus on victims," says Karl Shelly, a pastor at Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen. "Every witness we make has to be mindful of victims. We need to have active compassion. It's amazing that parents who have lost a loved one, such as [the parents of] Matthew Shepard, speak so strongly for not taking another life.

"Sometimes tradition in itself doesn't speak to putting faith into action. People are looking for something to provoke their imagination and commitment. ... It's important to help young people and others be biblically based in their advocacy. I try to deal with what was Jesus' response to the death penalty."

How can we reconcile calls for the death penalty with the reconciliation and redemption Christ offers everyone? Our aim is to transform unjust situations, an intention of Jesus and servants of God, as Scripture points us beyond punishment. Ultimately, our goal is to love one another and to uphold all life, not destroy it.

David Whettstone works for the Mennonite Central Committee Washington Office.

Resources on the death penalty

The following works, which offer broader discussions of the Scriptures and other issues, are recommended for further study:

- *The Death Penalty: A Guide For Christians* by Bob Gross (faithQuest, 1991)
- *Against the Death Penalty: Christian and Secular Arguments Against Capital Punishment* by Gardner C. Hanks (Herald Press, 1997)
- *Death As a Penalty: A Moral, Practical, and Theological Discussion* by Howard Zehr (MCC, 1998)

Death penalty system 'fraught with serious error'

A nationwide study of how the American capital punishment system has worked over the last 23 years found a pattern of errors resulting in the reversal of nearly 70 percent of capital convictions.

"Our 23 years' worth of findings reveal a capital punishment system that is collapsing under the weight of its own mistakes," the study said.

The study, by Columbia Law School professor James S. Liebman, looked at all of the nearly 5,500 capital convictions and appeals between 1973 and 1995.

One finding concluded that nearly every state with the death penalty had such serious mistakes in captial convictions that more than half their death sentences were overturned. When cases with errors were retried, 82 percent resulted in a sentence less than death. Seven percent of cases that were retried ended with verdicts of innocence.

"American capital sentences are persistently and systematically fraught with serious error," said Liebman in a statement with the release of his study.

The study is the latest in a series of recent attacks on the way the death penalty is applied, coming from religious leaders, physicians and courts.—*Catholic News Service*

José's execution

With Jesus, justice leads to grace, even for a murderer.

by Al Whaley

The David Leibowitz column in the April 22, 1998, *Arizona Republic* told only half the story of José Roberto Villafuerte. Leibowitz was right in saying that the inhumane acts José perpetrated against Amelia Scoville can in no way be condoned in a civilized society. Ms. Scoville was a person created in the image of God, the mother of three children. She had the right to live. She was much more than Amelia Scoville, murder victim.

But also there was much more to José than José Villafuerte, murderer. Unfortunately, this was not said.

I'm glad I never met José before he was in prison. From what the court records say about him and from what he said about himself, he was not a nice man. He lived a life of debauchery—alcohol, drugs, sexual immorality. At the time he killed Ms. Scoville, whom he called his lover, he was married to another woman, by whom he had a son.

The murder of Amelia Scoville was a defining moment in his life. In the eyes of the world, he was and always will be, first and foremost, a murderer. He was convicted of a capital offense in a trial lasting four days when eight to nine months is the norm. The jury was originally hung and reached a verdict only after the judge refused to accept a hung decision. José was sent to Arizona State Prison at Florence and was placed in Cell Block 6 (death row) in July 1983. He was where he belonged. He had received justice.

It was as if Jesus had said, "José, you are free to go. I will take the lethal injection on your behalf. I will bear the punishment for all your sins and crimes."

Then came a second defining moment in the life of José Villafuerte. A guard, whose name has been forgotten, told José about Jesus. Another prisoner on death row was receiving visits from a minister in Tucson named John Ryberg. John began to visit José on a regular basis and received permission to baptize José in November 1986. The prison did not have a baptistry, so the casing of a water heater served the purpose. About this time John invited me to visit José with him. Because of the language barrier (José's English was difficult to understand), an interpreter often accompanied us.

Our two-hour visits always featured Bible study, prayer and listening to José's concerns. We felt encouraged by José's continued interest in spiritual things: his Bible correspondence courses, his concern for the spiritual well-being of his extended family and his interest in the things John and I were experiencing in our respective churches.

Religious News Service

He could be exasperating: He liked to argue fine points of theology; he frequently begged for money; he had health problems that were real to him but were mostly nonexistent according to the copies of the medical reports he sent us.

Although Arizona had the death penalty on the books, there had been no executions since the U.S. Supreme Court restored the death penalty in 1976. Some joked that death row was the safest place in the state. That all changed when Arizona resumed executions in 1992. José was targeted because of the length of time he had already spent on death row.

Numerous last-ditch attempts to spare his life failed, and he received human justice just after midnight on Wednesday, April 22, 1998. He addressed his last words to his son: "Don't worry about me, I'm going to be with Jesus."

José had not only received justice; he had also received grace.

Moses was a murderer. Moses received grace.

David was a murderer. David received grace.

Paul was a murderer. Paul received grace.

José was a murderer. José received grace.

Our sins put Jesus on the cross. It was not murder because Jesus died for us voluntarily. But he died in our place. It was as if Jesus had said, "José, you are free to go. I will take the lethal injection on your behalf. I will bear the punishment for all your sins and crimes."

José's life was not only defined by justice but by grace.

Al Whaley is pastor of First Mennonite Church, Phoenix.

America does not need capital punishment

There are acceptable alternatives to a practice that degrades us all.

by Michael B. Ross

When we abolished the punishment for treason that you should be hanged and then cut down while still alive, then disemboweled while still alive, and then quartered, we did not abolish that punishment because we sympathized with traitors but because we took the view that this was a punishment no longer consistent with our self-respect.—Lord Chancellor Gardiner

These words, spoken during the 1965 death penalty abolition debates in the British Parliament, illustrate the feeling of most individuals opposed to capital punishment. It's not sympathy toward the murderer that we feel; indeed, most of us feel anger and revulsion toward murderers and their actions. Our objection is that the death penalty is a renunciation of all that is embodied in our concept of humanity. Executions degrade us all.

In today's society the execution process is far removed from most citizens. We may, or more likely may not, be aware of the criminal acts that put an individual on death row—and if we are it is usually only through sensationalized press accounts—but few of us know the human being society has condemned to death. And even fewer of us have witnessed or ever will witness an actual execution. They are carried out in the middle of the night, away from us all, to hide what they are—a barbaric punishment symbolic of our less-civilized past. The public is kept as far away as possible from the whole process to keep them from seeing that human beings—flesh-and-blood people—are being put to death. This deliberate dehumanization of the process makes it easier for us to distance ourselves from capital punishment and to accept it as something government does, which in turn allows us to avoid accepting individual responsibility for the consequences of such actions. But we are responsible, for our state and federal governments are killing people in our names.

Pillar of our ideals: The state is supposed to be the pillar of our ideals, and its institutions should emulate the best values of our society. Are not the greatest of these values our compassion, our concern for human rights and our capacity for mercy? By continuing to conduct executions, aren't we undermining the foundations of our greatness? As Zimbabwean poet Chenjerai Hove wrote: "The death sentence is abominable, as abominable as the crime itself. Our society must be based on love, not hatred and victimization. Our penal code must be based on rehabilitation rather than annihilation." As long as the spirit of vengeance maintains the slightest vestige of respectability, as long as it pervades the public mind and infuses its evil upon the statute books of law, we will make no headway toward the control of crime in our society.

There are acceptable alternatives to capital punishment more in line with the values of our supposedly enlightened and humanistic society. Individuals who are a danger to society must be removed from society. Society has the right to protect itself. If rehabilitation is not possible or is not a consideration, then that removal must be made permanent. But that permanent removal need not take the form of the death penalty.

Long-term sentences: Those who favor the abolition of capital punishment do not then advocate releasing convicted murderers into society. The choice we have is not between the death penalty and unconditional release but between the death penalty and meaningful long-term sentences. Life without the possibility of parole meets the necessary requirements of society without being excessively brutal or barbaric.

Feelings of retribution, vengeance, blood atonement and the like are difficult to suppress. Perhaps there are some individuals who, in some sense, "deserve" to be executed. But the question that needs to be asked is, Do we really need the death penalty? In light of such suitable alternatives as life sentences without parole, is society in general paying too high a price when it executes its own citizens? The late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall once wrote, "I cannot agree that the American people have been so hardened, so embittered that they want to take the life of one who performs even the basest criminal act, knowing that the execution is nothing more than bloodlust."

While it is admittedly difficult at times, when we recognize the humanity of even the vilest criminal—when we acknowledge them as fellow human beings rather than as objects to be discarded—we pay ourselves the highest of tributes and celebrate our own humanity.

What can you do? You can get involved, for no justice is done if everyone leaves the work of justice to everyone else. There are numerous local, state and national organizations working hard to rid this country of capital punishment. (See box above right.) They need your help and support.

For a list of groups working against capital punishment, send $3 for *The Abolitionist's Directory* to: The National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, 1436 U St. NW, Suite 104, Washington, DC 20009; 202-387-3890.

Michael B. Ross has been on Connecticut's death row since June 1987. He is under a stay of execution pending the resolution of the appeals process.

Director of transformation answers call to become U.S. church's top executive

ELKHART, Ind.—Five years after leaving pastoral ministry to oversee the creation of a new denomination, Jim Schrag thought he might return to the pulpit when the job is done. Instead, he will become the denomination's top executive.

Schrag has accepted an invitation from the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board to serve as the new church's first executive director, starting immediately following the churchwide assembly to be held in Nashville, Tenn., July 2-7, 2001. Schrag is currently head of the Transformation Team, which is overseeing the formation of Mennonite Church USA out of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

In his acceptance letter to Mennonite Church USA moderator Lee Snyder, Schrag said he considers the board's invitation to be a call from God. "I am devoted to the new church, and I believe transformation is God's purpose for us," he wrote.

Snyder says: "Jim told us he would only consider this assignment as executive director of Mennonite Church USA if it was clearly a call from the church, and so we were especially thorough in seeking counsel from the broader church. When we shared what we had learned with Jim, he was ready to give this potential appointment consideration."

She says leaders across the church highlighted Schrag's strong pastoral gifts and spiritual depth, his visionary leadership and ability to move forward and his passion for the unity of the church. Snyder also notes his ability to confront with grace, his strong administrative gifts and his sensitivity to racial and gender inclusiveness.

"[Church] leaders strongly affirmed Jim Schrag for this new role," Snyder says. "We announce this appointment with enthusiasm and deep gratitude."

At Nashville, U.S. GC and MC delegates are expected to take final action to formally merge their two bodies into Mennonite Church USA. The General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church still exist in the United States but since 1999 have functioned under one Executive Board. While Schrag, GC general secretary from 1996 to 1999, has directed the transformation process, George Stoltzfus, who had been MC general secretary, has served as Mennonite Church USA general secretary during the transition.

Stoltzfus says he excluded his name from the list of possible candidates for executive director. "This is an important role in the formation of the new church body, and I am grateful that Jim has been asked and is willing to serve in this way," he says.

Schrag

Snyder affirms Stoltzfus' work and emphasizes the close working relationship Schrag and he will continue to have in their current positions until the Nashville convention. "They will together continue to give leadership to the board and the transformation process," she says.

Schrag served as pastor of Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan., from 1973 to 1985 and Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio, from 1985 to 1996. He was also co-chair of the planning committee for the 1983 joint convention in Bethlehem, Pa., chair of the Western District Conference education committee, Ohio Conference moderator and chair of an ad hoc committee for dual-conference congregations.

Schrag says he believes that transformation gives GC and MC members a new opportunity for witness and mission through a new fellowship and renewed purpose. "God is asking us to build upon the sacrifice and witness of our Anabaptist forebears, and God is inviting us to grow more into the likeness of Christ," he says.

Schrag and his wife, Judy, live in Newton, where he works out of GC headquarters. But he says his appointment as executive director is not an indicator of location of the new denomination's offices. "It doesn't tip the scales," Schrag says. "The appointment doesn't influence the decision."

He added that he is willing to move to wherever the offices will be placed. At the Transformation Team's August meeting, a committee will be named to study the issue of location of Mennonite Church USA offices.

Bookstore manager receives top award

Ken Reinford of Provident Bookstores has been named the top Christian bookstore manager in the country. He is eastern regional manager for Provident Bookstores, the retail division of Mennonite Publishing House.

He was presented the first Jim Carlson Award July 10 during the Christian Booksellers Association annual convention in New Orleans. The award recognizes the person who "exemplifies Christian bookseller best practices and produces positive results from the use of these practices."

Reinford, who has been with Provident since 1972, received a trophy, bookends and a trip for two anywhere in the United States.

Conference leaders express support for new Mennonite Church

At the May 2000 meeting of the Constituency Leaders Council of MC and GC area conference leaders, conference representatives from Northern District and Iowa-Nebraska Conference issued words of support for the emerging church:

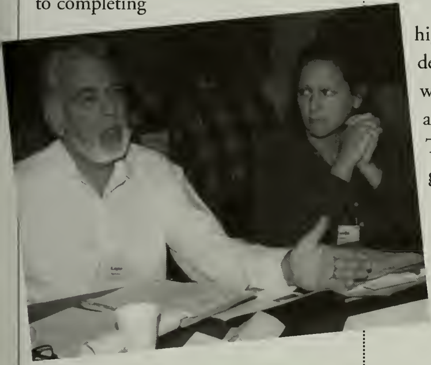
"We view with dismay the hesitation about joining the new Mennonite Church USA. In our opinion, God's work is being delayed. We are committed without reservation to completing the merger of the GC Northern District and the MC Iowa-Nebraska Conference. We know that we have issues and problems to solve, but we are confident that God will lead us.

"We are committed to leading the new Central Plains Mennonite Conference into the Mennonite Church USA, without knowing exactly what further changes may be made to the membership guidelines, now or in Nashville.

"Why? First, we have the highest level of trust in our denominational leaders. Second, we are excited about the vision and strategies proposed by the Transformation Team. We are going to be part of this transformed denomination, but we don't want to be there by ourselves! We want all of you there with us.

"We challenge you as conference leaders to commit yourselves to helping your area conference join the transformed church."

Will your area conference catch this enthusiasm for what God can do among us? Help your congregation and area conference make enthusiastic commitments to the new church in the coming months.



The Constituency Leaders Council is providing leadership for proposing new membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA. Here, Guadalupe Aguilar of the Hispanic Mennonite Convention speaks at the recent meeting of the CLC in Kansas City, Kan., May 24-25, as Wanda Stopher, a representative from Ohio Mennonite Conference, listens.

Participants sing God's praises at the Mission Transformation consultation in Harrisonburg, Va., March 24-26.

Mission: The heart of the new Mennonite Church

As the transformation of the new Mennonite Church continues, GCs and MCs are united around the belief that mission should become the heart of the new church.

This call came from hundreds of congregations, envisioning a new Mennonite Church in which "mission is our reason for being" as congregations, conferences and a denomination. North American mission leaders and agencies, gathered in March in Harrisonburg, Va., saw the new church as a new organism – one that by its very nature is engaged in mission in every vessel and cell of the body of Christ.

As the Constituency Leaders Council heard in May about proposed new mission structures from the Mission Transformation team, it captured their hearts. "When we focus on mission, I get energized," said Marv Zehr of Western District (GC) Conference. "It is my prayer that the mission agenda may soon overtake us all," said Owen Burkholder of Virginia (MC) Mennonite Conference.

What does it mean for mission to be the heart of the new body now in formation? It means that the passion for mission pulses through the arteries to the entire church body. As individual parts of the body are engaged in mission, their energy circulates to the national church through the veins. This blood, the seed of the martyrs, that which keeps us in communion with Jesus Christ, brings new life to the church as we extend ourselves to others.

In July, Mennonites from around the world gathered in Guatemala for a global consultation on mission. Join with us in praying that God will lead us into a new common vision, rooted in what is at the heart of our faith.

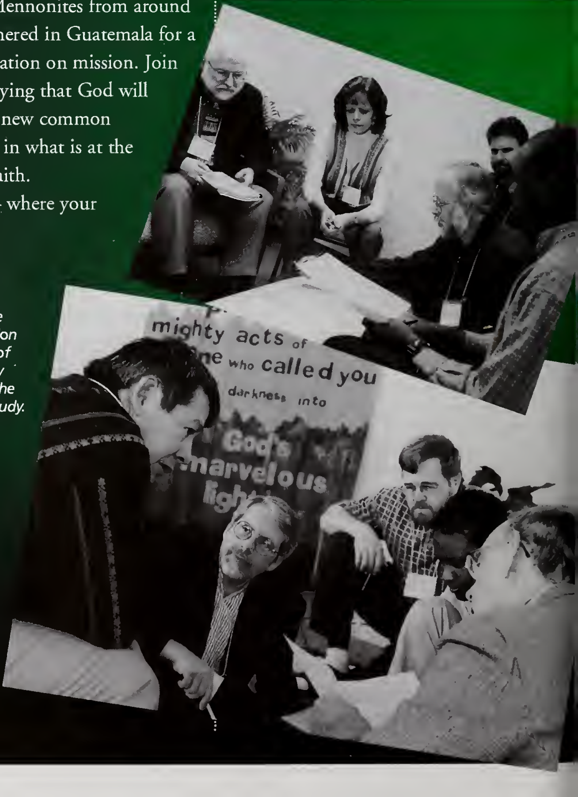
Mission – where your heart is.

Envisioning a new future

Our mission agencies have spent much time listening to God's people. Hopes, dreams and visions for the futur have been heard through the congregational study and through mission study task groups. Their insight will help shape our future.

The church of the New Testament has many faces, each one informing our own purpose and strategy as the new Mennonite Church. Some biblical image are familiar – the church as salt, as light, as a city on a hill, the church as a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a body and a chosen race. Other images are less used – the church as a field, a boat, a bride o a tree of life with its leaves offering healing and hope for the nations.

Others have shared contemporary images of the church we can become – the church must become an orchestra playing a common song, but with different instruments, parts and rhythms. The church is a photo album showing the stor of God's walk with God's people through many centuries. Others see the church as a community of dandelions, deeply roote misunderstood and persecuted, its seed spread by the winds of the Spirit.



Participants at the mission consultation review the work of four mission study task groups and the congregational study.

Mennonite
Church
USA

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Funding our future together as a new church

Across the church, Mennonite leaders are deeply engaged in the transformation process as we create a new Mennonite Church USA. To help all church members join in this transformation journey, Sunday, Oct. 29, is designated as a time of celebration. On that day, we invite your congregation to:

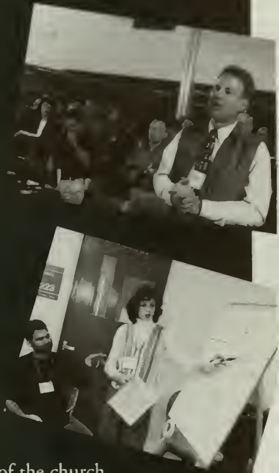
- Recommit to our future together.
- Receive an offering for the transformation process.

The new Mennonite Church USA is raising $800,000 to fund its portion of 1999-2001 expenses of uniting the two church bodies in the United States. The first $29,635 has already been contributed or pledged by those closest to the project. Every member of the Transformation Funding Task Force and Mennonite Church USA Executive Board has financially contributed to this project. Virtually all members of the Constituency Leaders Council have also given.

We invite your financial contributions on Oct. 29 as congregations across the country receive a special offering as a recommitment to our future together. This offering will allow us to find new opportunities to let God's healing and hope flow through us to the world. Send your contributions to the Transformation Funding Project, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS, 67114.

Ervin Stutzman, moderator-elect, and Lee Snyder, moderator, of Mennonite Church USA.

Giving to God: Developing a funding system for the new church



For the past year a Funding Committee has been working to develop a funding system for our new denomination. The system that is emerging will give the transformed Mennonite Church USA:

- opportunities to respond to God in worshipful ways, often with money;
- a means to foster good relationships between congregations and agencies;
- practices that fit our vision of the church.

The proposed funding system is based on biblical foundations of first fruits giving:

- God wants a relationship with us.
- After bringing to God the first and best, the remainder is managed in generous ways that also honor God.
- In the history of God's people, the gathering place is the most important collection point for worshipful giving, as well as the center for distribution.
- Households, congregations and ministry organizations are temporary caretakers of financial resources. Each should be an example of generosity to others, even as they care for their own well-being.
- Giving is an act of worship.

As we partner in this shared vision for funding within the transformed Mennonite Church USA, we want to continue to seek God's wisdom together in forging a new denomination that honors God in every way. If you have not yet responded to the funding system design, we welcome your counsel and response. You can review the funding system materials on the web at *www.MennoniteChurchUSA.org/tranformation* and send your response to *yvonnedk@juno.com.*

Something new in God's design

The "formation" part of transformation is clearly the most valuable part. God is the master sculptor, shaping everything, including the church of his Son, Jesus Christ. It is like the Psalmist declared of himself, "You knit me together in my mother's womb" (Psalm 139:13 NIV).

So we believe, in spite of our worries or doubts about God's handiwork in our present re-formation into Mennonite Church USA, that God is displaying his handiwork in us once again.

I delight in watching our 17-month-old grandson. His awareness of himself and the world around him grows day by day. The unconscious purpose of his activity is to access his inborn capacities and develop his potential.

So also it is in this generation of Mennonites. Like my grandson, Mennonites are mostly unaware of the formation process we are experiencing at God's initiative.

Like my grandson, we sometimes stumble in our search for the fullest expression of God's truth. We become impatient to get what we decide is best. Then God reminds us that it is God, not we, who is the sculptor of our corporate identity in the church of Jesus Christ.

God is forming a new church in and through us—whether we are aware of it or not. It is being fashioned, as always, by God's choice, in the image of Christ. It is an extension of the martyr's sacrifice that is a part of our unique faith story. It includes people who are not of Swiss or Dutch or South German origin. It is something new in God's design.

These are indeed good times for Mennonites as we seek new avenues of faithfulness, born of a new fellowship.

Jim Schrag
Project Director
Transformation Team

In Christ, held together
Nashville 2001
Colossians 3:12-17

July 2-7, 2001

Make sure members of your congregation are present in Nashville to help form the new Mennonite Church USA!

Sharing with others the gift of God's love, we

- **worship God through our praise, prayer and study of Scripture.**
- **serve people in need, no matter who they are.**
- **invite people to faith in Jesus Christ, and to join the community of believers.**
- **challenge each other to become more Christ-like by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

(proposed mission statement for Mennonite Church USA)

Congregational gatherings bring support for transformation

Almost 30 gatherings in 18 states and the District of Columbia were held March-June 2000 for worship, fellowship and information sharing about the transforming Mennonite Church USA. Seventeen preachers spoke to more than 5,000 people, using the Rev. 21:5 text, "Behold, I am making all things new," to suggest new possibilities for the new church. One woman wrote this letter of response to a gathering she attended in eastern Pennsylvania –

Enclosed is my check for Project Transformation USA. I am including this note to tell you that the congregational gathering at Forest Hills Mennonite Church (Leola, Pa.) on Sunday evening, May 21, was a great blessing to me. It was such a worshipful service.

It is exciting to see what God is doing in our denomination as He brings into being a "new thing," transforming us from two bodies into one new denomination. I am excited about what is happening. God bless all of you who work so hard to bring peace and unity where there seems to be so much mistrust.

Be assured of my continued prayers for you and for the church these days.

Mennonite Church
USA

Colombian pastor forced to leave his home after his social justice work produces threats

BOGOTA, Colombia—For the past seven years, Raúl Vásquez has pastored the Mennonite congregation in Girardot, Colombia. But on a recent Sunday morning, Vásquez was leading singing in another Mennonite congregation in a town far from Girardot, his smile and strong voice belying the tensions of the death threats that have forced him to leave his home.

With the experience of having several other church leaders similarly forced to temporarily leave their homes, the Colombian Mennonite Church last year asked Mennonite Central Committee to make a fund available to help support church leaders when they need to flee. The Colombian Mennonite Church and MCC are sharing the costs for helping Vásquez while he cannot be in Girardot.

Vásquez's situation is rooted in his faith. "It has always been my desire to not just present the Bible but also to be involved in social action," he says.

The threats began when his congregation asked the city of Girardot to create an ecological park on unused land in front of the church. Other parties wanted to build a sports complex on the land. When the city approved the ecological park over the sports complex, Vásquez started receiving threatening messages.

He also was threatened because of his membership in a local human rights organization. Although he resigned from the organization, Vásquez continued to participate in some activities and in conciliation seminars.

A third source of threats developed when Vásquez made a pastoral visit just at the time when the father of the household was making a payment to his son's kidnappers. (Kidnapping is common in Colombia.) "I didn't arrive there at an ideal time," Vásquez says. "I saw clearly the person who was receiving the money."

As the threats became more frequent, Vásquez had to adapt, including moving to a new apartment and guarding his telephone number. "My human rights activities lessened a lot, but I haven't stopped them completely," he says. "And I don't leave the house alone. If I'm going to make a visit, I always leave with one of the church youth or another member of the church."

After about three peaceful months, a man arrived at his door holding a frayed Bible, asking Vásquez to come out to explain peace passages to him. Vásquez didn't recognize the man and was surprised when he asked for him by name. As he began looking for Bible verses, the man, who said he was a Christian, expressed himself more and more crudely. When the man moved his arms, Vásquez noticed a gun under his unbuttoned shirt.

"My legs began to tremble," Vásquez recalls. "Right then the telephone rang, and that was my exit. I excused myself, went back inside and didn't leave my apartment."

Vásquez then began receiving threatening phone calls in his new apartment. Together with his church, he decided that it was time to leave Girardot for several months. "I live with a lot of fear," Vásquez says.

Says Peter Stucky, president of the Colombian Mennonite Church: "In Colombia people get threatened and killed for many reasons. Threats have to be taken seriously."

But that doesn't keep Vásquez from dreaming about the future. "Girardot leaders want us to work with displaced people, to open a center for them," he says. "There is work to do with street children.

"I believe the gospel is a holistic gospel. … We need to help those who are living through difficulty."—*Daryl Yoder-Bontrager for MCC News Service*

Colombians protest U.S. aid package

Congress' recent decision to send $1.3 billion in aid to Colombia is "lighter fluid among flames," say two Colombian Mennonites.

In a July 1 letter, Peter Stucky, president of the Colombian Mennonite Church, and Ricardo Esquivia, director of the Mennonite peace organization Justapaz, call for North American Mennonites to oppose the financial aid, of which 90 percent is earmarked for the military.

Stucky and Esquivia say such U.S. support, which probably will be followed by similar packages from European countries, will not help end 50 years of strife in Colombia.

"More arms produce more war in the middle of social conflict. … It will only increase the number of deaths and the suffering of the Colombian people," Stucky and Esquivia write.

They urge North Americans "to not remain quiet at this time but to unite your voices with ours in order to denounce the perverse nature of this kind of 'aid.'"

The letter also calls for prayer and fasting for the situation in Colombia.

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

By water and the Spirit

Two new Christians prepare to be baptized near Det Udom in northeast Thailand. As a result of Eastern Mennonite Missions work among the Isaan people in the area, about 150 baptized believers have organized themselves into eight village churches around Det Udom. Mission efforts are now focusing on training Thai evangelists to continue reaching out, using a program designed to connect with Buddhist ways of thinking. Called the Life Enrichment Course, it emphasizes that the truths discovered by Buddha are consistent with Moses' and Christ's teachings. Local efforts also include a financial development program, which offers low-interest, high-accountability loans.

Come who are weary and burdened

MBM fund offers rest, renewal for urban ministers

McCALL, Idaho—It's a long way from the crime and economic depression of inner-city Chicago to the sandy beaches, huge ponderosa pines and mountain view by Payette Lake, near McCall. But that's exactly why Elaine Bryant was there.

Bryant, pastor of Chicago's Englewood Mennonite Church, and her husband last month spent a week at Payette Lake. The break, her first in six years, came thanks to a grant from Mennonite Board of Missions' (MBM) Kauffman Memorial Fund for urban workers to escape, rest and renew their vision for ministry.

"I was excited because the offer came and awakened in me a longtime desire to spend some time in the woods by a lake," Bryant says. "The Lord knew I had an aspiration for reflection and writing.

"I've been overextended for some time, and this was the Lord saying it's time to deal with that."

The Bryants stayed in a mobile home on the lake owned by Jeanie and Lyn Hershey, who established the Kauffman Memorial Fund in memory of Jeanie's parents, George and Pearl Kauffman. The Kauffmans pastored and planted churches in Montana and Oregon for many years. The Hersheys, who also hold ministerial credentials, wished to build on George's belief that time for renewal is essential to ministry.

"We both know that rest is extremely important," Jeanie says. "God does work through people, and God can't do his best work if we're tired and worn out.

"People that go into [church] work often get so involved it is hard to take the time needed for rest. There are often more limited resources in those families also."

God does work through people, and God can't do his best work if we're tired and worn out.

—Jeanie Hershey

The fund began last year, giving four grants, and has already given five in 2000. Besides the option of staying in the Hershey's vacation spot in Idaho, the funds may provide for an evening out, a weekend away or a longer vacation. Marriage and family counseling are also available.

Two church workers among the Navajo in Chinle, Ariz., recently received a grant for a vacation, or perhaps a honeymoon, even though they have been married for many years and have 10 children. Originally married in a tribal and legal ceremony, the couple, who prefer to remain anonymous, last month renewed their wedding vows in a Christian service. Later this summer, the couple hope to travel to Pate, Ariz., to vacation.

The Hersheys, who live in Payette, Idaho, about 100 miles south of their lakeside vacation spot, consider gift applications in consultation with John Powell, MBM's director for Evangelism and Church Development, and his wife, Shirley. Recipients are recommended by area conference pastors or urban ministry consultants.

Administering the fund is a blessing, Jeanie says, because of the window it provides into people's lives. She says she and her husband enjoy "encouraging people on the front lines," giving them the opportunity to "get on track again and listen to the Spirit's direction."

—Anne Horst of MBM News Service

French delegates skip European conference in protest of workshops on homosexuality

LUDWIGSHAFEN, Germany—Two workshops on the acceptance of noncelibate homosexuals at last month's Mennonite European Regional Conference (MERK) prompted most French delegates to boycott the assembly.

Only 17 members from the Association des Eglises Evangeliques Mennonites de France attended MERK, which was held June 1-4 in Ludwigshafen. The AEEMF also withdrew from the MERK program committee.

The workshops were wanted by Dutch, German and Swiss groups. But the AEEMF holds that homosexual sexual activity is a sin. The two workshops were titled "Experiences With Homosexuality" and "On the Responsibility of Love." A third workshop focused on "Ways Out of Homosexuality."

About 940 people from 11 countries attended MERK, which is held every six years. This year's theme was "God's Wide Space." The main addresses were given by Maria-Noelle von der Recke, a French Mennonite theologian now living in Germany, and Deenabandhu Manchala, a Lutheran from India and Peace Concerns executive secretary for the World Council of Churches. Swiss Mennonite pastor Moyse Majordomo gave the Sunday morning sermon.—*MWC News Service*

Correction: Roger Hochstetler is moderator of Rocky Mountain Conference. His name was misspelled in the July 18 issue.

Nebraska congregation commits to keeping home-grown mission worker on the field

HENDERSON, Neb.—Most mission workers are quick to highlight the importance of their home congregation's support. One congregation has shown a particularly deep commitment as more than two dozen members of Bethesda Mennonite Church in Henderson have pledged to pay the tab of $29,000 per year to keep one of their own, Eugene Thieszen, on the mission field in Africa.

A year ago, Thieszen returned home from Botswana for a 12-month study leave. He has served in the southern Africa country since 1992 with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) through Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission. While in the United States, Thieszen developed his pastoral counseling skills to help deal with the African AIDS and HIV epidemic; he also took on an interim pastorate at Bethesda.

Last fall, COM executive secretary Ron Flaming visited Bethesda for a mission emphasis Sunday. One of the things he told the congregation was that budget constraints were making it difficult to consider new mission appointments. So one longtime member of the congregation asked how it can help make it possible for Thieszen to return to Botswana.

That same person came up with the idea of finding 29 people to commit $1,000 a year for three years—the length of a regular COM term.

The man, a local business leader, did not want his name used in an article. "This project is wholly Spirit-driven," he says. "It comes from love for Eugene and for his work. I want all the glory to go to God and the people of Bethesda.

"On the Sunday that I got up and volunteered Bethesda to pay for Eugene's three years, people were already coming up to talk to me about it before I left the church. They said, 'We've been supporting others for years. Now we get to support one of our own.' Eugene is our missionary; we take ownership of him."

While many congregations support mission workers, Bethesda may be the only one picking up the entire cost of a worker. Furthermore, the funding is above budget.

"For me as a missionary going off from this congregation, it's incredible to feel this kind of support," says Thieszen, who returned to Botswana earlier this month. "And I know it's prayer as well as financial."

The man who came up with the plan says his aim is to involve as many people in the congregation as possible in a variety of ways, such as through regular prayer support. "If people want to give, that's fine, but the amount doesn't matter," he says.

So far, 25 individuals or families have signed up for a three-year commitment. Not everyone can pledge $1,000 a year, but the project's leader says that's no problem. "Some people have already indicated they will help make up whatever deficit there might be," he says. "And every Sunday there is always between $200 and $400 in the offering plate, marked for Eugene's support, and I don't know who it's coming from."

GCMC photo by Kathryn Goertzen

Eugene Thieszen, Commission on Overseas Mission and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission worker to Botswana, receives a prayer stole from Weldon Martens, senior pastor of Thieszen's home congregation, Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb. Thieszen, who has been on a year's leave, was commissioned by his congregation in late June for his continuing work in Botswana. He returned this month.

Thieszen points out, however, that the congregation has always given to his work, including raising money for a 4x4 vehicle.

Thieszen and the man who initiated the project have visited each of the pledgers in their homes. "I want this to be something that everyone in the church can be involved in, whether they give money or not," says the man. "And those who have signed up are committed not just to giving money but to praying, too."—*Melanie Zuercher of AIMM and GCMC news services*

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by the way ...

Joseph Taylor was the first American Mennonite to hold a doctorate, receiving a doctoral degree in pedagogy degree from New York University in 1892 or 1893.

MCC food arrives to feed homeless in Ethiopia

DESSIE, Ethiopia—More than 700 tons of wheat sent by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) have arrived in drought-stricken Ethiopia. A Dutch Christian agency, ZOA Refugee Care, is distributing the food, mostly to people from neighboring Eritrea who had been displaced by hostilities between Eritrea and Ethiopia.

"These people are living on the streets," says ZOA project coordinator Ina van Uffelen-Kerkdyk. "Many of them are very desperate. The displaced people seem to be a forgotten group right now."

The Ethiopian government does not consider displaced people as drought-affected and are therefore not eligible for emergency food assistance. But the drought has increased food prices and forced more people to beg. —*MCC News Service*

1999-2000 banner fiscal year for EMU

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Contributions to Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) for the past fiscal year were the second highest in history as the Harrisonburg school recorded $4.9 million in gift income for 1999-2000.

Preliminary calculations indicate that EMU should end the year in the black, says Ronald E. Piper, vice president for finance.

EMU received $3.82 million for restricted projects, endowments and other programs. That included $1.1 million in cash and pledges for the University Commons construction project. Another $1.16 million was contributed in undesignated gifts, short of the goal of $1.35 million.

Last year's giving to EMU set a record of $5.7 million, bolstered by a $1.3 million Lilly Endowmnent grant.

Congolese lay leader dies at age 64

ELKHART, Ind.—Kakesa Samuel Kaka, the first African to serve as legal representative of the Congo Mennonite Church (CMCo), died June 23 at the age of 64. He had been living in the Congolese city of Kikwit.

Kaka, a businessman, was appointed to the position in the early 1960s as the church sought its government charter. As legal representative, he was the official voice of the church in all matters of government concern. During political upheaval in 1964, Kaka was imprisoned by rebel forces, who charged him with misusing government funds.

Kaka and his wife, Kafutshi, were the CMCo delegates to the 1972 Mennonite World Conference assembly in Curitiba, Brazil. They also visited North American Mennonites in 1972 and 1996.—*AIMM News Service*

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Births

Chupp, Cheyenne Malinda, June 16, to Lois (Meyer) and Ron Chupp, Goshen, Ind.

Driewer, Samantha Jean, July 5, to Brenda (Gross) and Scott Driewer, York, Neb.

Fertich, Aiden Grey, June 6, to Nance (Light) and Scot Fertich, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Francisco, Taylor Ashley, July 1, to Karla and Steven Francisco, Hampton, Va.

Kolb, Jamie Grace, June 23, to Brent and Rory (Gahman) Kolb, Perkasie, Pa.

Massaro, David Stanley, May 31, to Kristen (Estrada) and Steven Massaro, Marshallville, Ohio.

McGrew, Joseph Michael and Todd Stet (twins), July 1, to Shawn and Whitney (Cope) McGrew, Marietta, Pa.

Phillips, Austin Mitchell, June 22, to Mitch and Wendy (Wagler) Phillips, Hartville, Ohio.

Roth, Brianna Joyce, June 2, to Catherine and Dwight Roth, Edmonton.

Marriages

Allebach/Mast: Melissa Allebach, Souderton, Pa., and Marcelo Mast, Lansdale, Pa., July 2 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Birky/McMannis: Kristina Birky, Foosland, Ill., and Michael McMannis, Champaign, Ill., June 24 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Borton/Rupp: Lee Borton, Wauseon, Ohio, and Marjorie Rupp, Archbold, Ohio, July 8 at Tedrow Mennonite Church, Wauseon.

Brenneman/McCormick: Steve Brenneman, Accident, Md., and Shannon McCormick, Spencer, N.Y., May 20 at Spencer.

Frankenfield/Young: Andrew Frankenfield, Elroy, Pa., and Tanya Young, Pennsburg, Pa., July 1 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Friesen/Hanus: Staci Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and Jeramy Hanus, Lincoln, Neb., July 1 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Green/McKenzie: Peggy Green, Chicago, and Robert McKenzie, Glen Ellyn, Ill., June 3 at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.

Halteman/Miller: Alissa Halteman, Accident, Md., and Sonny Miller, Grantsville, Md., June 10 at Accident.

Hofstetter/Troyer: Bryan Hofstetter, Kidron, Ohio, and Linda Troyer, Fredericksburg, Ohio, July 1 at Kidron.

Kaufman/Lance: Eugene Kaufman, McPherson, Kan., and Cheryl Lance, Valley Center, Kan., June 22 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson.

Leichty/Schotsman: Michael Leichty, Wellman, Iowa, and Melanie Schotsman, Dundas, Ont., July 1 at Dundas.

Lind/Yoder: David Lind, Three Rivers, Mich., and Kendra Yoder, Akron, Pa., July 1 at Akron.

Miller/Streit: Jason Miller, Kidron, Ohio, and Krista Streit, Wooster, Ohio, June 17.

Murphy/Yoder: Jamie Murphy, Newton, Kan., and Jessica Yoder, Newton, July 1 at First Mennonite Church, Newton.

Pankratz/Whitaker: Wesley Pankratz, Inola, Okla., and Sarah Whitaker, Inola, July 4 at First Presbyterian Church, Claremore, Okla.

Rosenberg/Zimmerman: Will Rosenberg, Hastings, Neb., and Mary Zimmerman, Beatrice, Neb., June 24 at First United Methodist Church, Lincoln, Neb.

Deaths

Bowman, Martha Pennington, 60, Hatfield, Pa., died June 12. Spouse: Carl Bowman. Other survivors: children Dan, Mary. Funeral: June 14 at Upper Skippack Mennonite Church, Creamery, Pa.

Gardner, Evelyn Honderich, 81, Goshen, Ind., died June 12 of complications resulting from mylofibrosis. Spouse: Victor Gardner (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Ida Zook Honderich (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Vicki Lichti, Brenda Smith; nine grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 16 at Clinton Brick Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hartzler, Glenn, 65, Marshallville, Ohio, died June 14 from cancer of the esophagus. Spouse: Elsie Mumaw Hartzler. Parents: Harvey and Edith Hostetler Hartzler (deceased). Other survivors: children Dwight, Bruce, Tim, Michael, Jennifer; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: June 17 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville, Ohio.

Lehman, Wilbur, 94, Nappanee, Ind., died June 5, Spouse: Pearl Lehman (deceased). Survivors: children Arlene Mast, Marilyn Hochstedler, Paul; nine grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: June 8 at Nappanee.

Martens, Kathryn Ensz, 81, Westminster, Colo., died June 5. Spouse: Walter Martens. Parents: George and Mary Ensz (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Ron, Carolyn Grant; six grandchildren. Memorial service: June 8 at Arvada, Colo.

Schmidt, Richard, 91, Newton, Kan., died May 19. Spouse: Ruth Woelk Schmidt. Parents: Peter and Anna Unruh Schmidt (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Frances Schrag, Donald, Elizabeth Duerksen, Kathryn Mathews; 12 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 23 at Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church, Goessel, Kan.

Sensenig, Ruth Elizabeth Lehman Leatherman, 86, Nederland, Texas, died June 19. Spouse: Titus Sensenig (deceased). Parents: George and Leah Lehman (deceased). Survivors: children Lois Miller, Walter; stepchildren Ruth Burkholder, Richard, Kenneth, Lamarr, Daniel; 24 grandchildren; 35 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 27 at Ephrata (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Mennonite Central Committee invites applications for the position of

DIRECTOR of International Program

Key qualifications include: International leadership experience; Understanding of global mission; Ability to think and plan strategically within a complex organization.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking.

Starting date: **June 4, 2001**
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Applications will be accepted through DECEMBER 1, 2000

Direct inquiries to: **Charmayne Brubaker or Becky Stahly, MCC Human Resources, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, phone 717-859-1151, fax: 717-859-2171, email: cdb@mcc.org or rss@mcc.org**

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  Contact Northern Indiana District Office, 219-773-3149.

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  Fax resumes to Matt McMullen, Principal, 330-877-2040; or call 330-877-2049.

- **Friendship Community**, Lititz, Pa., is actively seeking applicants for the ***program supervisor*** position. If you are interested in assisting adults with mental disabilities, call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466 ext. 102; email <amy.horst@friendship-comm.org>. Christian mission. EOE

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  For more information, please contact Sherrie Ober at 717-859-8117; email <smo@villages-mcc.org>.

- **Bay Shore Mennonite Church**, Sarasota, Fla., is seeking a full-time ***minister of youth***. Candidates should have a deep appreciation of Anabaptist beliefs and a strong commitment to see youth follow Christ.

  Please contact or send resume to: Wayne Lambright, P.O. Box 7093, Sarasota, FL 34278; email <wlambright@aol.com>.

- **Chicago Mennonite Learning Center**, a multiracial, inner-city elementary school, is seeking full-time ***3rd/4th and 5th/6th-grade teachers*** and a part-time ***computer instructor***. Begin Aug. 14, 2000. Contact Myrna Miller, Assistant Principal, 773-735-9304; email <myrna@info-launch.com>.

- **Foothills Mennonite Church**, Calgary, Alberta, seeks a full-time ***associate pastor***. Our hope is that the associate pastor, along with parents, church leaders and the wider congregation, will create a nurturing environment where children and youth are encouraged and challenged to commit to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a lifelong service to his church. We seek a person with a growing and visible faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior who is committed to the church as expressed in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

  For more information, please contact Pastor Search Committee, 2115 Urbana Rd. NW, Calgary, AB T2N 4B9; 403-289-7172; fax 403-210-2209; email <FoothillsMennonite@attglobal.net>.

- **Mennonite Health Services** seeks applicants for an ***executive-level position***. The position is half-time as executive director for a new alliance of church-related retirement communities in southeastern Pennsylvania and half-time as a vice president with Mennonite Health Services. Responsibilities include representing MHS in the eastern United States, planning and implementing programs and services. Qualified candidates will have executive experience, strong communication skills, a proven ability to pursue opportunity and will be committed to an Anabaptist faith perspective.

  Send resume and inquiries by Aug. 15 to Rick Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; or call 1-800-611-4007.

- **Mennonite Women** invites applications for a full-time ***executive director***. Some of the qualities and expectations are: clear Christian commitment; understanding, commitment and readiness to promote the vision/purpose of Mennonite Women and Mennonite Church Canada and USA; desire and ability to foster, resource and nurture established women's groups and new initiatives; demonstrated ability to coordinate activities of an office, as well as provide supervision and direction for staff; demonstrated skills at working independently, setting and following through on goals; readiness to travel as part of the role (estimated 13-16 trips annually). Position to begin in early fall 2000.

  Please send resume or direct inquires by Aug. 9, 2000, to Mennonite Women Search Committee, c/o Elizabeth Klassen, 237 Becker St., Kitchener, ON N2B 1X8; 519-576-1497; email <gerliz@ionline.net>.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** invites applications for:

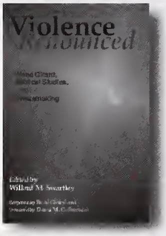
  Country director for Bangladesh: Starting date Jan. 5, 2001. Key qualifications: proven ability to lead large, diverse agency or company; ability to build team spirit among some 20 expatriates and 200 national staff; ability to network with government, church and community leaders. Previous overseas management experience highly desired.

  Associate director for Bangladesh: Starting date Jan. 5, 2001. Key qualifications: ability and strong interest in helping MCC volunteers adapt to life and work in Bangladesh; ability to build team spirit among some 20 volunteers and 200 national staff. Previous overseas management experience preferred.

  Staff development director for Bangladesh: Starting date: immediately. Key qualifications: ability to design and set in place staff development program, including policies, procedures and structure, for some 200 national staff working with MCC in Bangladesh; ability to institute a system for staff performance appraisals and to establish salaries and benefits.

  All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

  Direct inquiries to Becky Stahly or Charmayne Brubaker, MCC Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-1151; fax 717-859-2171; email <rss@mcc.org> or <cdb@mcc.org>.



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by Rich Preheim

Missionary omission

The numbers don't lie. That prompts *Mission Frontiers* to relate that the biblical injunction called the Great Commission has become the "Great Omission" of the black church in America. Out of a population of 34 million, only about 250 African-Americans are working full-time in cross-cultural missions.

Eighty-one percent of African-American missionaries in a recent survey said black churches neglected teaching about world evangelism; 31 percent said pastors had discouraged them from such work; and 29 percent had been criticized for serving outside the African-American community.

At a conference last year, the Cooperative Mission Network of the African Dispersion cited several reasons for the Great Omission, including: ignorance of mission needs and mission heritage of African-Americans, the desire to keep money at home for congregational stability and therefore not send money out, and fear of rejection by white mission agencies.

Yet blacks from America have a long history of overseas mission work, including establishing missions and congregations in the Bahamas and Sierra Leone in the late 18th century. Some 200 African-Americans were on mission fields worldwide between 1890 and 1910, primarily in Africa and the West Indies.

The role of women

While African-Americans struggle to find a place for missions overseas, the oldest U.S. black denomination recently made history in this country. Vashti McKenzie, a pastor from Baltimore, was voted in July 11 as the first female bishop in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, reports Charisma News Service. McKenzie joins 18 other bishops who lead the 213-year-old, 2.3 million-member denomination. Seventy percent of the church is female.

A church for all seasons

Canadian ministers who have lost their credentials may now be able to find a new home. All Seasons Church was created three years ago primarily as a safety net for clergy who have had a falling out with their denominations, says *The Observer.* About 30 clergy from across Canada are associated with All Seasons.

Depending on provincial requirements, All Seasons credentials can allow a minister to conduct marriages and funerals. Administrator Casey McKibbon, a former United Church of Canada pastor, says All Seasons would also credential people for specific ministries.

But the new group doesn't accept everyone. There is an ordination committee, and credentials are reviewed annually. McKibbon says all ministers come from recognized denominations, "not the local Church of Banana Bread."

Marriages seem to be All Seasons ministers' chief business. McKibbon says many couples are unchurched or divorced and not permitted to remarry in another denomination. He recently married a couple from Vietnam who couldn't document that they had already been married in their native country.

40 years in the wilderness

Cuba's Baptists had an easy way of remembering when they held their last public evangelistic rally. It was in 1959, the year Fidel Castro came to power.

The next rallies were 41 years in coming, but they happened earlier this month. As many as 3,000 people turned out each of two evenings for the Cuban Baptists' first public rallies in 41 years, held in a Havana sports arena. They were held in conjunction with the Baptist World Alliance General Council's meeting in Havana July 3-8, according to Baptist Press.

"It's an impact in all of Cuba, especially the people of Havana, to know that all Cuban Baptists are working to win Cuba for Christ," declared Victor Gonzales, general secretary of the Baptist Convention of Western Cuba.

The country is home to 418 Baptist congregations and 901 mission sites with approximately 38,000 baptized members.

Canning Christianity

One might expect the flavors of "the first Christian soft drink" to be something biblical, such as wine mixed with gall or vinegar. Instead, Holy Cross Soda features citrus and root beer inside the can and Bible verses on the outside, reports *U.S. Catholic.* The drinks were introduced last year by a Knoxville, Tenn., entrepreneur who says that profits "go mostly for the Lord."

On the road to destruction

Here's another sign of our culture literally running over religion. The farm of Jacob Urich, near Lawrence, Kan., and the site of the first Brethren love feast (footwashing, communion and a meal) in the state in 1857, is slated to be destroyed as part of a highway expansion project, according to the Church of the Brethren's *Messenger.*

Tidbits

- Private Protestant elementary and secondary schools constitute 14 percent of all U.S. schools, compared with 1 percent in 1965. —*Christianity Today*
- The Bible has been translated into 2,212 languages and dialects.—*National Catholic Reporter*
- The U.S. funeral business is worth $25 billion annually.—*Sojourners*
- Ninety-one percent of Canadians with only a high school education believe in God, while 80 percent of university-educated Canadians do. —*ChristianWeek*
- There are 3,600 Christian radio and TV stations around the world. —*Holiness Today*

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J. Lorne Peachey

From Vietnam to membership:

Editing through 'interesting' times

With this issue, I conclude 30 years as a journalist for the Mennonite church. This is also the last issue in which I'll have direct involvement with *The Mennonite*, though I have been asked to stay on in a consulting role until a new editor comes on board in November.

How does one sum up 30 years of work during times which are turbulent, stimulating, difficult and fulfilling? "Interesting" is one word I'd use. Then I remember that the Chinese have an infamous curse: "May you live in interesting times."

In some ways, the Chinese are right. I found out just how interesting the times could be in 1968 when editing my first magazine—*With*, a joint publication for youth of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. My second issue didn't have an article on the Vietnam War because the publishers deemed it too politically sensitive and explosive, even for pacifist Mennonites.

That, and other issues of the late '60s—draft dodging, the Beatles and sex—had me answering letters and phone calls and participating in intense conversations, particularly at churchwide gatherings. Today the issues are homosexuality and church membership, and the letters and phone calls continue. What's new are emails.

Between Vietnam and membership, as editor of *Christian Living* and *Gospel Herald*, the tough discussions were around divorce and remarriage and women in pastoral leadership. And, of course, biblical interpretation. The most difficult one I had to handle, however, was reporting on sexual misconduct by leaders.

But the Chinese had it only half right. Interesting can be something to avoid, if you want an uneventful life. But interesting can also be something to embrace. My computer's Merriam-Webster dictionary (a more recent editor's tool) defines "interesting" as "something that holds attention, arouses interest."

Most gratifyingly, publications continue to hold attention and arouse interest in the church. Unlike what is true for many other denominations, Mennonites continue to feel deeply about their magazine. Just one example is the number of letters we receive each week. Our readers want to discuss the issues. They feel strongly about what's going on in their world, from Vietnam to membership. They won't let us get by with sloppy work. I thank God every day for my call to be an editor for a group that takes its faith so seriously.

That call is what has made editing so fulfilling for me. Throughout these 30 years, especially the last three as editor of *The Mennonite*, I've sensed God's presence and the direction of the Spirit to be very close as I've worked with our weekly routine and our deadlines.

Now I sense that this call is complete. My dream has been to spend my last years before retirement with less stringent deadlines. God has made that possible. Beginning Aug. 1, I will be director of marketing for Pennsylvania Mennonite Federal Credit Union—an organization I managed during a hiatus from editing in 1984-1990—and for Sharing Programs of Lancaster Conference, a property and automobile insurance agency. These two organizations have plans for joint financial service work, in which I'll also be involved.

I leave the magazine in good shape and in good hands. Last year we managed to pay all our bills and have significant revenue for future improvements. These will be in the hands of a competent staff, who will be joined by a new editor, Everett J. Thomas, on Nov. 1.

My wish for the new editor, a close friend and spiritual colleague, is this: that you make his job an interesting one—though it could be a bit less in the Chinese sense and a little more by the Merriam-Webster definition. Support him as you have me. Pray for him, call him, send him emails. All those expressions of caring and support from the church were what got me through these 30 years. Thanks.

Long ago, as another group of God's children were on the verge of going from one interesting time to another, God instructed Moses to give this blessing to Israel: "The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace" (Numbers 6:24-26).

This is my wish for the new Mennonite Church as I conclude 30 years as editor. For all that has been, thanks. For all that will be, peace.—*jlp*

For all that has been, thanks. For all that will be, peace.

No issue next week: The next regularly scheduled issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated Aug. 8.

the Mennonite

August 8, 2000

Nếu là chim
Nếu là hoa ....

Vietnam

a look back 25 years after the war

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19 Fireworks of force, not freedom

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Community and individuality

Re "Judge Faith Face-to-Face" by Mitchell Brown (July 18): I liked the way the author used difficult-to-understand areas of the Bible to illuminate his premise, which I take to be that small communities, rather than the large corporate church as a whole, are the best at deciding membership issues. I agree that speaking face-to-face with those wishing membership is much more desirable.

Still, I take issue with Brown's assertion that individuals cannot be saved except in the context of religious community, although he does modify his statement to say, "It's not that individuals aren't saved; it's just that that notion has no meaning." I believe that faith is strengthened by worshiping in spiritual community, but I don't believe that being saved has no meaning apart from that. Belief must be an individual activity; thus, salvation is an individual activity.

I was born and spent 36 years in the Mormon church, which believes it has exclusive right to be called the kingdom of God. Since coming out of that church with my late husband and children 16 years ago, I have had difficulty with the idea that a religious organization could take precedence over an individual's personal relationship with Jesus. My experience with religious control was just too negative. I feel that the years have brought peace, and I rejoice in serving the Lord through my participation in my Mennonite congregation.

The church community consists of those who have the faith to welcome this salvation and those who don't but are growing toward that. The church community can plant seeds of faith through teaching about Jesus, and it can strengthen and nurture the resulting spiritual plants that grow. Ultimately, though, a saving faith must be developed deep in the individual, so that even when not in that church community, he or she has it to stand on.—*Suzanne Roth, Canby, Ore.*

Mitchell Brown put the emphasis where it belongs. Discipling the believer in the context of the local, intimate community with Christ present in the Holy Spirit is the way our Lord and the apostles have taught us. I applaud those who are working so patiently to bring us together in a transformed Mennonite Church. I pray they will take this message to heart.

No one has yet answered a question that lingers in my heart: If we are constructing a ban at the denominational level for same-sex covenanted friendships, why do we limit the ban to one minority group? Why not include divorce and remarriage, military service, living a lavish lifestyle, promoting division in the church and the like. Please, less legalism, more faith in one another and Spirit discernment where people come to Christ.

Our beloved Lancaster Conference bishop and former moderator David Thomas, who recently went to be with the Lord, told me (and others have heard the same from him) that the issue of divorce used to be discussed freely on the conference bishop board, but the issue was not decided there by voting. It was referred back to the congregations and districts facing the problem. It was there the people involved were known personally, loved dearly and could be dealt with in prayer and counsel. Sounds like heavenly wisdom to me.—*Chester L. Wenger, Lancaster, Pa.*

I wonder what Daniel, Rahab and the thief on the cross would say to Brown's statement that Jesus doesn't save individuals, he saves communities? What would the early Anabaptists say who were burned, chopped and drowned for their personal stand on faith, people who did not think it was enough that their parents had baptized them into a community but believed that each must make their own stand before Christ? "Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come into you and eat with you, and you with me" (Revelation 3:20). Jesus does save individuals. God saves us into community, a commune that begins with a simple meal with Jesus.—*Pam Short, Archbold, Ohio*

Brown's article is a delightfully expressed word about membership. His method of reading and applying the Bible is at least as important as the message he distills. If I could learn to read the Bible with these other skills he seems to employ, I would marvelously enrich and deepen my spiritual walk with God and the ethics that result. I hope many others will join me in working at it. As we understand and respect more deeply the differing ways we read and apply the Bible, we will be able to experience more profoundly the ecstasy of our common union at God's Table.—*Walter S. Friesen, Newton, Kan.*

Killing the innocent

The July 25 issue devoted three articles and the cover to protest killing those convicted of murder. Could someone help me understand

theMennonite

Vol. 3, No. 29, August 8, 2000

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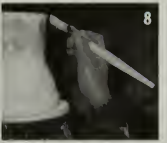
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readers say

why it is that *The Mennonite* and Mennonites concerned about killing and justice seem to ignore the thousands of infants (who are certainly not guilty) being legally, brutally killed in North America and elsewhere by partial-birth abortions? Could not our church send a letter to the president to urge him to sign, instead of veto, the bill that would stop such killing? Why is there no official protest by our church? Are infants less valuable than adults? Is it OK to kill infants if it's the choice of the mother and the abortionist just because it's legal? May God help us not be silent about this infanticide, as were the churches in Hitler's Germany.—*David Clymer, Shirleysburg, Pa.*

Notes of appreciation

I am writing to say how much I have appreciated J. Lorne Peachey's editorials. He managed to stay unbiased yet informative. Many of the editorials have left me blessed by his words of wisdom. My wife and I have definitely received inspiration from them. I always referred to them as notes from "jalapeño" because of his JLP signature. Reading his editorials came to be a fresh insight just like a bite of the pepper. I feel he has a sensible, biblical and spiritual basis that helps keep us going. Thanks for the many years of editorials. Good luck to him on his next endeavor.—*Walter Bachman, Goshen, Ind.*

I read Peachey's last editorial ("Editing Through 'Interesting' Times," July 25) with great interest and warmth. It was classic Lorne. I want to express my appreciation for his work over the years. I especially appreciated the way he did his work as mission. He has been "administering grace in its various forms," as Peter says we should. For this I am most grateful.—*Lee Delp, Lansdale, Pa.*

Cover photo courtesy of Earl Martin

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Night falls on the neighborhood

Lora Jost

by Jean Janzen

Rows of low houses recede
into the collecting dark
Asphalt street is iridescent

with spills of streetlamp and oil,
walkways lead to shut doors.
And palm trees scrape high

against the blackening cobalt sky.
Each house is a locked box,
separate and dimmed.

Nothing is revealed.
Only the ear pressed against
the rumble of a pillow hears

in first deep sleep the secret
of the neighborhood—that we all ride
earth's original music,

that what binds us one to the other
is ocean toss and the rise of mountains.
That God's brooding still hovers

over us, each one, each house.
And over the red car which leans against
the curb, ready for a fresh start.

Jean Janzen lives in Fresno, Calif.

Nếu là chim . . .
Nếu là hoa . . .

Four who stayed: From left are Max Ediger, James Klassen, Earl Martin and Yoshihiro Ichikawa.

MCC photo supplied by Earl Martin

Vietnam after 25 years

On April 30, 1975, Americans evacuated Saigon, Vietnam, and Vietnamese President Duong announced the unconditional surrender of his government to the communist Vietcong. The war was over. Four Mennonite Central Committee workers stayed after the change in government. Two of those four—Max Ediger and Earl Martin—reflect on that time, and current MCC Vietnam country representatives Fran and Ken Martens Friesen trace MCC's history in Vietnam. Jim Klassen, another of the four who stayed, recounts his experience in returning to Vietnam to preach (page 9).

Choosing to stay when others leave

by Max Ediger

April 29, 1975. The city of Saigon was in chaos. Helicopters flew overhead, ferrying people from the roof of the American embassy to ships awaiting them in the South China Sea. People locked their shops and houses to keep potential looters out and others walked in hurried, unfocused steps down the streets, seeking a place they could feel safe.

Advancing communist forces now surrounded the city, and shelling, anti-aircraft fire and machine gun bursts rose above the cacophony, constant reminders that war had now come directly to Saigon. With the airport closed, the only escape was the helicopter shuttles flying like drunken dragonflies in and out of the embassy compound.

The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) office in Saigon had been declared a zone of "peace and quiet" in which no discussion of evacuation was allowed. Our decision to stay had already been made, but in such a dramatic situation, we could not make that decision without the counsel and support of close and knowledgeable local friends. Their lives and futures had to be considered.

At about 4 p.m. the telephone rang. Thuan, a university friend, said, "Haven't you left yet?"

"No," I said. "We've decided to stay."

"You can't; you've got to leave!"

"You know our commitment. We've talked about peace, and now we want to stay with our friends here."

"I know that. But when they [the Vietcong] come in, they won't know who you are. You've got to leave!"

"We can't now," I said. "The airport's closed. Anyway, we've already made our decision."

Thuan hung up. I sat down to meditate. Did we make the right decision? Thirty minutes later, Thuan drove up on his old Vespa scooter. I met him in front of our office and we sat on the steps. Neither of us said a word. After 15 minutes, Thuan stood up, shook my hand in a tight grip, and without a word walked to his Vespa and drove off. His eyes had expressed his concern for all his friends in MCC.

After Thuan's departure, I suddenly felt fear. What was ahead? What if the Vietcong don't know who we are and what we have stood for these past years? Are we being naive?

Then another scooter, a Honda, pulled up. Chi Hien hopped off and bounded up our steps in her usual exuberant way.

"Are you guys staying?" she said.

"Yes," I said.

"Good. You should be here to witness the change. You have stood for peace, now you can finally see it come to our country. Don't worry," she said. "If there is heavy fighting in Saigon and it comes in this direction, I'll send someone to lead you to a safe place."

We stayed in Vietnam because trusted friends and colleagues urged us to.

To speak about peace and nonviolence is easy. To live it out in life is often difficult. We believed that our message of Christ's way of peace required that we demonstrate it in our own reactions to the changes and uncertainties around us.

Chi Hien looked at me with a broad grin. "The war's ending, Max! The war's ending!" A moment later she was back on her Honda, heading out into the chaotic traffic, leaving me with a sense of calm and rightness about our presence in this time and place of dramatic change.

We stayed in Vietnam because trusted friends and colleagues urged us to. We had spent much time with them during the years of struggle against the war, and their counsel was important. It was not always easy for them, for they were concerned about our safety as well, and the coming change was fraught with uncertainties. Yet they gave the impression that our presence during this time was important for them. To stay was a sign that we trusted them and the future they were building.

We also stayed in Vietnam because of a commitment to keep word and action harmonious. To speak about peace and nonviolence is easy. To live it out in life is often difficult. We believed that our message of Christ's way of peace required that we demonstrate it in our own reactions to the changes and uncertainties around us. In other words, don't talk about peace if you do not have the courage to act it out in practical ways when uncertainties and dangers lurk. It's not easy; it requires not only faith and trust in the God of peace but also in friends who must risk much in continuing a friendship through unpredictable changes.

We stayed in Vietnam to see history unfold. We witnessed this unbelievable phenomenon in all its excitement, hope, pain, fear and sadness. We can now only pray that all we learned from this event and from the friends who helped lead us through it will not be forgotten but be built on to continue the wonderful challenge of building God's kingdom wherever we are.

Max Ediger is a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Thailand. He served with MCC in Vietnam from 1971 to 1976, staying exactly one year after the communists took control of the country. Originally from Turpin, Okla., Max is a member of Turpin Mennonite Church.

Vietnam's gift: to be angry, to grieve, forgive, heal

by Earl Martin

Hiro, a Japanese Mennonite co-worker, and I set out on our bicycles. Anh My, the physical therapist in the Quaker rehab center, joined us. We soon left behind the dusty town of Quang Ngai, our home for five years. We headed out the gravel road toward the South China Sea. We pedaled between emerald rice paddies on both sides of the road. At a village market that spilled out onto the road, we steered carefully through baskets of sweet potatoes and "rau muong," the leafy watercress.

We rode past the village of My Lai. Seven years earlier, on March 16, 1968, American troops full of rage and fear helicoptered into this village and burned houses and opened fire on the farmer families. By morning's end, 502 men, women and children lay slain. But today, three days after the 1975 communist takeover of our province, My Lai lay quiet. The rebuilt mud and thatch houses sat mostly hidden within a great grove of bamboo and coconut trees.

Just beyond My Lai, we came to a wide canal. No way across. The dike that once spanned the canal had long since been bombed. We would have to find a boat. And in due time, one showed up. A local fisherman rowed his woven bamboo boat toward us across the canal. When he pulled his boat ashore and spotted us, he yelled out in alarm, "American! Grab him. Don't let him loose! Get him. Quick!"

Anh My quickly stepped to the boatman's side. "Sir, sir," he said, "these [men] are different. They are not here to fight the war. They are friends of the Vietnamese."

"But look what they did to our village," the boatman waved toward My Lai. "They not only burned our houses and killed our people, they even bulldozed our graves into the sea. Grab him, I say!"

But Anh My continued to explain the work of Mennonite Central Committee, helping farmers deal with unexploded munitions in the fields and providing assistance for dislocated farmers. Hiro and I tried to look as pleasant and harmless as possible.

Finally, the boatman said, "It's hard to believe, but if these fellows are who you say they are, then I accept them as friends. And I'll take them across the canal in my boat."

The ability of many Vietnamese people to let go of the past and consider new possibilities astounds many visitors to Vietnam. In recent years numerous U.S. veterans have returned to Vietnam and discovered warmth and hospitality among the people. One vet, who returned three times, told me, "I am just trying to find a way to live in Vietnam."

Suspicion ran deep during the war. But somewhere within the Vietnamese people lives a capacity to heal. This ability to be angry, to grieve and to move on without bitterness remains for me one of the profoundest gifts of the Vietnamese people.

One afternoon on a visit to Vietnam a few years ago, Mr. Sung, a longtime artist friend, took me up a bamboo ladder through bougainvillea branches to his flat porch roof. In this sacred get-away, he sits cross-legged an hour each afternoon as he looks out over rice paddies and mountains and contemplates wholeness for his native land.

In the same small town, I attended an evangelical church and heard the venerable Pastor Vong preach on Palm Sunday to 150 farmer folk packed into the village chapel. Appealing to the image of Christ nailed on the cross, Pastor Vong asked the congregation, "How does our Savior on the cross say we shall respond to our enemies?"

Enemy ("Ke thu") was a word that carried much power for people who had lived under bombs—a people whose families had been divided on opposite sides of the war, a people who had seen sons and fathers sent off after the war's end to years of hard labor called "re-education." These people knew what "enemy" meant.

Pastor Vong repeated his question, "How does Jesus on the cross ask us to respond to our enemies?" He waited a moment for us to wrestle with the question, then said, "Jesus says to his enemies, 'Father, forgive them.' "

I thank God for the people of Vietnam.

Earl Martin is a member of Shalom Mennonite Fellowship in Harrisonburg, Va. He served with Mennonite Central Committee in Vietnam from 1966 to 1969 and from 1973 to 1975, staying three months after the communists took control of the country.

Like branches of a banyan tree: building peace in Vietnam

by Fran and Ken Martens Friesen

MCC photo by Larry Guengerich

For nine years, 27-year old Trinh Xuan Dich (above) has painted ceramics in the Vietnamese city of Bat Trang. East of Hanoi, Bat Trang is famous for its blue and white ceramics. Nearly everyone in this village has some role in the production of ceramics. Because he is one of the most talented painters, Trinh Xuan Dich is able to earn twice the national average wage. He can paint 60 to 100 cups per day. Ceramics he paints are marketed in North America by Ten Thousand Villages, a nonprofit program of Mennonite Central Committee.

The many branches of this thick, gnarled banyan tree reach and twist, each in its own direction, much like the peace-building branches of Mennonite Central Committee in Vietnam over the past 25 years.

MCC's peace-building efforts have taken many forms. The most dramatic and stressful time, the time of war up to 1975, tested the very foundations of our peace stance. But immediately after the war, when MCC could no longer have a continuous physical presence in Vietnam, as well as after 1989, when it could, peace-building continued.

Giving a cup of water: From 1975 to 1990, MCC staff made regular visits to a Vietnam largely cut off from the rest of the world. Louise Buhler, MCC representative to Vietnam from 1982 to 1987, says: "MCC's greatest accomplishment during these years was the building of relationships and trust. MCC's effort, especially as an American organization, to be there at such a dire, isolated time in Vietnam's history was a powerful sign of hope and peace."

MCC's work during this period consisted of concrete, practical projects intended to show the Vietnamese government that MCC was serious about building a long-term relationship. These included well-digging and irrigation projects; a 1984 exchange with MCC Bangladesh engineers in soybean production and crop diversification; exposure trips of Vietnamese medical personnel to Thailand, the Philippines and Canada; and importation of medicines, food, cement and steel.

"Vietnam was a country on the verge of starvation," Buhler says. "When I looked around, everyone seemed hungry."

The cup of water MCC provided in that thirsty time has not been forgotten. Concrete action and personal contacts continue to play a role (along with MCC's neutral wartime stance) in cementing the long and enduring relationship with MCC that Vietnamese leaders still cite today.

Turning the other cheek: In 1990, the invitation came for MCC to set up an office in Hanoi. MCC was the first North American non-governmental organization invited back to Vietnam. Stan and Janet Reedy, MCC's country representatives at the time, say, "People on the street would ask if we were French or Soviet and be surprised when we said we were Americans."

Along with the newness came the suspicions and restrictions. Vietnamese people were not allowed to visit the Reedys socially and were screened if they did. The couple's most traumatic moment came when MCC's first English teacher, Miriam Hershberger, was deported on suspicion of being a spy.

"Everything came to a stop for us at that moment. We assumed we were next to be arrested," the Reedys say. They wondered whether they should leave. Then they heard over shortwave radio the response from MCC headquarters to the deportation.

"It was a reconciling statement, and it seemed so ironic that in Hanoi over the Voice of America we were being reminded of who we were and why we were there," Stan and Janet say. "It was a difficult time, trying to be peacemakers when we felt so violated."

Miriam impressed Vietnamese officials when, back in the United States, she signed a petition calling for normalization of relations and lifting of the trade embargo. Last year, Vietnamese officials apologized for their breach of trust in asking an MCC volunteer to leave. By turning the cheek, MCC had made an enduring impression.

Making disciples: The past 10 years have seen MCC's programs settle into more predictable grooves, with increasing opportunities for contact and responsibility at the village level, for English teaching and for handicraft development work. The challenge now is to find Vietnamese nationals who share MCC's peacemaking vision and can train others.

One such person, Pham Dinh Thai, a committed Christian with an understanding of the complexities and joys of working with the poor, was selected to complete a three-month peace and conflict resolution training in Scotland in 1993. Later he helped found a social work organization, unique to Vietnam, that trains others and carries out development projects.

MCC has the opportunity to develop conflict-resolution training for partners working at the grass-roots level. Besides gathering information about traditional Vietnamese ways of resolving conflict at the community level, MCC in April sponsored the first training of Vietnamese development workers in Hanoi in negotiation and mediation.

Peace-building takes many forms, but as every banyan branch in MCC's Vietnam history illustrates, the sources of peace-building in this county are the people-to-people contacts, the efforts at right relations lasting through thick and thin, relationships at all levels, from farmers to officials. This is our call from God.

Fran and Ken Martens Friesen are Mennonite Central Committee's country representatives in Vietnam. They are from Mount Rainier, Md., and are members of Community House Church of Washington.

Nearly impossible

An American finds an alive and growing church in Vietnam.

by James Klassen

The short, stocky gentleman shook his head. I had just finished preaching in Vietnamese at the Vinh Phuoc Church in Nha Trang, Vietnam, on April 30.

But the man was smiling as he shook my hand. "It's impossible," he said in Vietnamese, "for any American to preach in Vietnam, but you did. Only at a wedding—or maybe a funeral—would that be possible."

I had shared some reflections on love based on 1 Corinthians 13 for a wedding ceremony that morning. The previous day, however, Rev. Hung, the senior pastor, asked me to preach a full-length sermon. "I'm honored by your request," I said, "but I don't want to create problems for you or for the church."

"It's no problem," Rev. Hung said.

Another feature of the wedding besides my preaching helped make it historic in the life of the congregation: I was a proud uncle for the two couples who exchanged vows after my sermon. One bride was the oldest niece on my wife's side, and the groom of the other couple was our nephew.

Three simple points formed the framework for my sermon: (1) God is love, so we should be loving. (2) Love is patient and forgiving. (3) Love is kind and gentle.

As a church member led the congregation of 500 in prayer, one sentence caught my attention: "Thank you, Lord, for these past 25 years of peace in our country." Amen. That was the only reference all morning to April 30, 1975, when the war ended. I had been in Vietnam for that occasion, too. As a worker for Mennonite Central Committee, I had voluntarily stayed through the change of governments and continued teaching Bible for a small group of Christians until 1976.

Now at the wedding banquet, I asked Rev. Giao, senior pastor at the Evangelical Church in downtown Nha Trang, about the Easter service there one week earlier. His face beamed. "It was great. Twelve people accepted Christ during the altar call—and that's not all. We baptized 40 new believers that day."

Miss Lieu, the evangelist at the Rocky Mountain Chapel in the leprosarium compound on the outskirts of Nha Trang, visited Ly, my wife, and me the day after the wedding. I asked, "How was your Easter service a week ago?" Her face lit up, too. "It was great. The church has grown so much that we need to have two services on Sunday mornings now, and both were packed for Easter. In fact, we're planning to build a new, larger church."

I thought back to December 1990. My father had just passed away, and our entire family had agreed that the memorial fund for him should be donated to help finish building that Rocky Mountain Chapel. In 10 years the chapel had become too small for even two Sunday morning services. Who would have thought that would be possible in an area where every family is touched by leprosy? I had preached there at a 5 a.m. Sunday worship in 1993 and led a Thursday morning Bible study there in 1999.

Although our stay in Vietnam was just one week long, we had seen God work in such amazing ways.

We boarded an overnight train for Saigon and met a Christian young man from the Evangelical Church on Nguyen Thi Phuong Street in Saigon. "Actually," the young man told us, "I've just been a Christian for about six months. The peace that God has given me is so precious. Every week about seven new believers commit their lives to the Lord—usually two or three at each worship service."

The day before we left Vietnam, we spent seven hours at the hospital with a cousin and her family. Basically blind in one eye and rapidly losing sight in the other eye, she pleaded with her doctor, the best eye surgeon in Saigon. Although earlier he had agreed to perform the surgery, now he was declining. "Your case is terribly difficult," the doctor said, "and my reputation is on the line if I fail." He finally agreed to do the surgery. We had been praying for her eyes and for her extended family.

Courtesy photo

God at work: From left are Rev. Hung, Ly Tran Klassen and the author in Vietnam.

Our cousin, who is not a Christian, came home just before we left for the airport. "My eyesight has improved so much," she said. "Next week I'm scheduled for surgery on the other eye. Then after all my surgeries are over, I want to go to church. Will they help me understand more about God?"

Ly and I said with joy, "Yes! Yes!"

Our uncle, a devout Buddhist, actually encouraged her: "I think it's a good idea if you follow the religion of Jim and Ly. You should go to church."

Although our stay in Vietnam was just one week long, we had seen God work in such amazing ways. What had looked impossible wasn't. Jesus said, "What is impossible for mortals is possible for God" (Luke 18:27).

James Klassen lives in Garland, Texas.

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Participants from Africa lead singing during the Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation, held July 12-16 in Guatemala City. The consultation, the first of its kind in Anabaptist circles, drew about 200 people from 50 countries.

Changing world, changing mission work

50 countries send representatives to historic consultation

GUATEMALA CITY—The face of the international Anabaptist church is changing. And those changes are leading to calls for new ways to do mission work.

About 200 people from Anabaptist churches in 50 countries met July 12-16 in Guatemala City for the Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation. It was the first-ever mission meeting held on such a far-reaching scale for Mennonites and Brethren in Christ on all continents.

Of the world's 1 milion-plus Anabaptist church members, more than half live in developing countries. They have fewer material resources than those in more affluent countries but are rich in relational gifts and zeal. That left consultation participants—leaders of conferences and mission agencies, mission experts and mission workers—grappling with the tensions, joys and implications of this shift.

The consultation findings report encouraged the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) General Council to establish a global mission council to communicate about missionary efforts around the world and promote regional and national mission projects and consultations.

The report also addressed gift-sharing issues: "Our worldwide resources are not evenly distributed, so we need to seek ways to share our material, human and spiritual resources so that they are used wisely for the kingdom."

A continuation committee, consisting of representatives from all continents, will further study and test the findings before forging a recommendation for the next MWC assembly, to be held in 2003 in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Stanley Green, president of Mennonite Board of Missions, said the consultation produced a good blend of building relationships and developing structures.

"On one hand, I feared we would have a big party and that a good time would be had by all … but that nothing would be defined," he said. "But on the other [hand], I feared we would rush too quickly into structures or develop structures not built on the flow of energies coming from relationships."

Said Willi Hugo Lopez of Guatemala, "There is a lot of hope in consultations like this … a lot of hope for how we will be renewed and leave with new ideas and purposes."

Some participants, however, feared the findings report didn't go far enough in defining new international mission structures. "We have been told this is a historic meeting," said John A. Lapp, a church historian from the United States. "I wonder if the response here is adequate enough."

It was for Nzash Lumeya of the Democratic Republic of Congo. "I will leave with gratitude for all who have listened to the Spirit speaking," he said. "And if I remember anything, it will be the inspiration that it is not only the 16th-century Anabaptists who can be faithful. But we today are also radical disciples sharing the gospel throughout the whole world."

The consultation was sponsored by MWC and the Council of International Ministries, a group of North American Anabaptist mission and service agencies.—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

Churches create, find connections

People came to the Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation July 12-16 in Guatemala City to discuss how to be better partners in mission work. But some discovered that they are already connected.

Since 1998, the International Mennonite Mission Board of Brazil and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions have been jointly supporting Brazilian Mennonite Norma Telles in Albania.

Next spring, United Haarlem Mennonite Church in the Netherlands will begin an exchange program with churches in Kenya, Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The program will start with 12 African women visiting the Netherlands for three weeks in May.—*Meetinghouse*

Virginia Conference to stay with merger process but calls for clarifications in membership proposal

HICKORY, N.C.—Virginia Conference delegates have cast their support for the transformation process, at least for now, by overwhelmingly defeating a resolution that could have kept the conference from joining Mennonite Church USA. But the delegates, meeting July 19-22 in Hickory, N.C., also urged the proposed denominational guidelines to take a stronger stand on the status of membership for noncelibate homosexuals.

The motion on joining Mennonite Church USA, which had been introduced and tabled at a delegate assembly in February, called for Virginia to not join the new denomination if its membership guidelines were not consistent with the conference's position on homosexuality. The resolution failed by an 86-18 vote.

"There was commendation for the work to date [on the Mennonite Church USA membership guidelines], strong desire to continue as part of the larger Mennonite Church, and there was affirmation and trust expressed for leadership and the process," said Ken Weaver, chair of Virginia's Faith and Life Commission.

The conference's statement on sexuality says that homosexual sexual activity is counter to Scripture and "a deviant expression of sexuality." The proposed denominational membership guidelines, released in June and now being widely circulated for feedback, uphold that homosexual sexual activity is a sin.

Delegate Gerald Martin said the membership proposal is fuzzy. "The document simply appeases both sides without clearly addressing the homosexual issue," he said. "Leaders need to focus on truth rather than focusing on making peace where there is no peace."

Most delegates agreed that some of the language was vague but said they could accept the guidelines with a few changes. The delegates approved without a dissenting vote a resolution calling for clarification that Mennonite Church USA "does not endorse" membership for noncelibate homosexuals. The resolution also asked that the guidelines "encourage ministry" to people with a homosexual orientation.

Conference moderator Joe Longacher said the resolution emphasizes dialogue, seeking a middle ground between total acceptance of homosexuality and shunning homosexuals. "One [resolution statement] is truth, the other is love, compassion, ministry," he said, "so you don't cut off conversation but be pretty clear about where you stand."

Virginia delegates will have three more sessions to decide whether or not to join Mennonite Church USA prior to a Feb. 1, 2002, deadline.

The assembly was the first time in the conference's 165 years that delegates had gathered outside the state of Virginia.—*Don Clymer with Rich Preheim*

MMA leading coalition of religious investors in protest of AT&T's addition of porn network

GOSHEN, Ind.—Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) and 26 other religious and socially concerned institutional investors are calling upon communications giant AT&T to reconsider its recent decision to include the pornographic Hot Network on its digital cable systems.

"We believe that most people of goodwill are concerned about corporate practices that detract from the character and quality of our society," the group wrote in a July 14 letter to AT&T. "And few would argue that pornography represents the best that our culture has to offer."

Among the the letter's signatories are Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Quaker groups with AT&T stock. They control more than 2.8 million shares, including 132,000 shares in MMA's Praxis Mutual Funds.

Mark Regier, MMA's socially responsible investing research and advocacy coordinator, says he is surprised by AT&T's decision to add the Hot Network to its systems.

"AT&T has established itself as a front-runner among socially responsible companies," says Regier, who is spearheading the coalition's efforts against the move. "Why they'd choose this path is unfathomable to us. Other companies, Time Warner and Comcast, declined to add the Hot Network to their cable packages. We still hope AT&T will reject it, too."

The coalition's letter, in addition to its concerns about pornography, also raised questions about AT&T's business practices. "What management missteps are behind a situation where AT&T must turn to strategies appealing to the basest element of our culture?" the letter asks. "If AT&T's management must resort to such tactics to achieve profitability in its cable business, what other management problems lay in wait for the unsuspecting investor?" —*MMA News Service*

Texas church closing provides Ohio hope

Hope Mennonite Church in the Fort Worth, Texas, suburb of Hurst closed its doors earlier this year. But the congregation is spreading the message of its name in Columbus, Ohio.

In 1992, Hope invested $44,000 with Church Extension Services (CES), a General Conference Mennonite Church investment and loan program to help congregations acquire meetinghouses. The congregation used $30,000 of that to buy land for a church building in 1994.

But when Hope decided to disband this past spring due to lack of leadership, it still had more than $26,000 in CES. So the congregation turned the money over to Mennonite Men's Tenth Man program, which provides grants for young congregations to buy or build their own meeting places.

As a result of Hope's gift, Agora Christian Fellowship in Columbus received its Tenth Man grant six months early.

"The bottom line is that we weren't able to build but some other church can," says Hope member Lee Bartel. "Something positive came out of our disappointment." —***GCMC News Service***

Bombings link Oklahomans, Kenyans

EMU program brings survivors together for healing

HARRISONBURG, Va.—The blasts reverberated around the world.

On April 19, 1995, a bomb exploded in a rental truck outside the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people and injuring 500 others. Three years later, on Aug. 7, 1998, another terrorist act leveled the U.S. Embassy in Nairobi, Kenya, claiming 250 lives and injuring 5,000 other people, many of them on the congested streets and in neighboring buildings.

In a quiet yet profound way, a number of survivors of both tragedies met face-to-face this summer to hear each other's experiences and, in the process, have received a new level of support and healing.

Three representatives of the Conflict Transformation Program, a graduate-level program at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, accompanied six survivors of the Nairobi embassy bombing to meet with survivors and their families of the Oklahoma City ordeal June 15-22. Three weeks later, four survivors of the Oklahoma blast and the CTP delegation held trauma healing workshops and other meetings for survivors and mourners of the Nairobi bombing.

The idea for the exchange visits originated with Karimi Kinoti, a CTP student from Kenya who had worked for the National Council of Churches of Kenya in a building across the street from the Nairobi embassy. Funding for the exchanges largely came from Church World Service with additional resources provided by foundation gifts for special CTP projects.

In Oklahoma City, the group visited with bombing survivors and their family members as well as with service providers and church groups. In Nairobi, the sessions were much more structured, including three intense days of workshops that drew about 70 people. A daylong open meeting attracted 400.

"We devoted considerable time to people telling their stories," says Krista Rigalo, a CTP student who accompanied the group to Nairobi. "It quickly became evident how important this was. People really wanted to talk, and for many participants it was their first opportunity to openly share what happened, their feelings and the lingering impact of this ordeal."

The surprising thing both groups discovered in the encounters was the similarity of emotions and experiences in both settings, says Jan Jenner, a CTP staff member who went to both Oklahoma City and Nairobi. "An almost magical connection took place between the Oklahomans and the Kenyans," she says.

Jan Jenner of Eastern Mennonite University's Conflict Transformation Program talks with Mike Kittivo, a survivor of the 1998 terrorist bombing of the U.S. embassy in Nairobi, Kenya. They are visiting on the former embassy site, where a memorial to victims and their families is being built.

Among the Oklahomans who traveled to Nairobi was Florence Rogers, a credit union manager in the Murrah Building who narrowly escaped death but lost 18 of her 33 employees. Jenner describes her as "an amazing woman who was able to say things to her Nairobi counterparts that the rest of us couldn't because of their shared experiences."

One of the main differences between Oklahoma City and Kenya was the disparity in financial resources and other safety nets available for the recovery process. Money, relief and other reconstruction assistance poured into Oklahoma City following the bombing. In Nairobi, worker's compensation, Social Security, civil defense plans and private insurance are inadequate or nonexistent. Most of the relief response that did come to Nairobi went to restoring buildings.

Yet financial issues rarely came up in the various sessions. What surfaced and grew rapidly, Jenner says, was "an immense feeling of compassion on both sides, a recognition of shared experiences and an incredible support and sense of caring as the week went on."

"As our sessions progressed, we gained a sense of two cities, one family," she says. "Persons recognized that … healing is a process, that people will never forget what happened but can integrate into their lives what they've learned from this devastating experience."—*Jim Bishop*

EMU hosts two global reunions

The work of the international church met in Harrisonburg, Va., this summer as the Eastern Mennonite University campus was the site of two reunions.

From June 29 to July 2, about 40 people associated with the Meserete Kristos Church, the Mennonite church in Ethiopia, held their second reunion. The gathering included Ethiopians now living in the United States and former missionaries in Ethiopia. They heard reports from MKC members about the needs in their country.

The reunion participants also pledged more money toward the goal of $150,000 for the building fund for Meserete Kristos College in Ethiopia.

The weekend after the Ethiopian meeting, more than 200 people gathered for a reunion of workers who had served in Vietnam. Participants—who came from as far away as Japan, Thailand, Switzerland and Kazakhstan—had served or are serving with Eastern Mennonite Missions, Mennonite Central Committee and a number of non-Mennonite agencies.

The weekend included the planting of a tree in memory of service workers who had lost their lives in Vietnam.

Vision for global Anabaptist church partnerships takes center stage at first Canadian assembly

LETHBRIDGE, Alta.—As they gathered for the inaugural Mennonite Church Canada assembly, delegates were encouraged to envision their church in partnerships beyond its current geographic borders.

The assembly, held July 19-23 in Lethbridge, was the first for the new, transformed church body, which was approved at last summer's convention in St. Louis. As Mennonite Church Canada begins, the assembly focused on its vision for the future, particularly on global relationships.

Gilberto Flores, a native Guatemalan and now director of the General Conference Mennonite Church's Hispanic Resource Ministries, admonished North Americans not to view Mennonites elsewhere as "missionary trophies." Instead, he invited the Canadian church to accompany the church in the South.

"Nothing can stop the missionary vision in the South," Flores said in his address. "Not even the lack of money. You can join us or we'll do it on our own."

Robert Suderman, executive secretary of the Mennonite Church Canada Resources Commission, arrived at the assembly after attending the first Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation in Guatemala City the week before. He said he dreams of an era of interdependence among churches in Canada and around the world.

Buoyed by unexpectedly high registration and sufficient income to cover meeting costs, the Mennonite Church Canada General Board designated two of the assembly's offerings for the global church: one for famine relief in Ethiopia and one for the Mennonite World Conference Global Sharing Fund.

Mission transformation was a major topic in reporting, workshops and plenary debate. Some delegates thought current proposals still reflected North American paternalism.

Relationships with U.S. Mennonites commanded much discussion. The creation of the new Mennonite Church will require a transformation of current binational mission agencies, but it is not yet clear what will emerge.

"We are looking for a structure that allows us to work together yet be flexible enough to respond to our unique concerns," Suderman said.

The proposals for the vision and structures for Mennonite Church Canada are to be ready for delegate action next summer and, if approved, implemented by February 2002.

In other assembly business, delegates reelected Ron Sawatsky as moderator for the next two years, even though he is moving to the United States. He began April 1 as chief executive officer for Rockhill Mennonite Community, a retirement community in Sellersville, Pa., and will move this summer to the area from Waterloo, Ont. The Mennonite Church Canada nominating committee said Sawatsky was nominated again in order to provide continuity to the transformation process.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Nothing can stop the missionary vision in the South. Not even the lack of money. You can join us or we'll do it on our own.

—Gilberto Flores

MCC U.S. calls on government to stop border violence

NEWTON, Kan.—Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) policies are violating the human rights of migrants crossing the United States' southern borders, says Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. And those policies allow vigilante groups to take the law into their own hands.

The MCC U.S. board last month urged the INS and federal government to look for long-term solutions and stop the border violence.

According to MCC U.S., INS policies are forcing migrants to cross the border on more dangerous terrain, where they have become targets of vigilante and white supremacist groups. The INS strategy "has not addressed the root causes of immigration, and has caused further deterioration of human rights for undocumented people and border residents," the MCC U.S. board statement says.—*John M. Spidalieri of MCC News Service*

Lyle Henry

Mennonite jam

Musicians gather for an impromptu jam session during Mennofolk 2000, a music festival held July 8-9 on the Bluffton (Ohio) College campus. The event was sponsored by the Peace, Service and Justice Commission of Central Distsrict Conference, The Lion and the Lamb Peace Arts Center at Bluffton and area congregations. The festival included folk, gospel, bluegrass and rock music performances, plus seminars and worship.

by the way ...

During the 1990s, Mennonites and Brethren in Christ from around the world began 50 new mission projects, each with the goal of developing an organized church.—*By Faith They Went Out* by Wilbert R. Shenk

Car accident claims life of camping executive

MOUNT PLEASANT, Pa.—Don Rittenhouse, president of the Mennonite Camping Association, was killed July 28 in a two-car accident on a southwestern Pennsylvania highway. He was 43.

Rittenhouse, who was also director of Laurelville Mennonite Church Center at Mount Pleasant, was returning to Laurelville from Harrisonburg, Va., when he lost control of his vehicle on the rain-slick highway. He was flown to the West Virginia University Trauma Center in Morgantown, where he died in surgery several hours later.

Rittenhouse had been Laurelville's executive director since 1995. Prior to that he had been in private business and had served with Mennonite Board of Missions. He is survived by his wife, Jane, and daughters Leah, 11, and Krista, 8.

YES celebrates 20 years 'outside the box'

LANCASTER, Pa.—Eastern Mennonite Missions' Youth Evangelism Service (YES) observed its 20th anniversary July 8 with recollections of the past and calls for obedience to the Lord in the present and future.

The first YES teams served in Belize, Germany and Staten Island, N.Y., in 1980. Since then, more than 1,300 participants have come from 32 countries and served in 47.

Jeryl Hollinger, the first YES director and now pastor of Mountain View Mennonite Church in Kalispell, Mont., was not able to attend. But in an email read during the celebration, he wrote: "It was a unique group of people who were present at EMM at that time who dreamed outside of the present boxes and were blessed with a few young people who wanted to experiment with something new. … Though YES has been a grand experiment, the power is not within its programmatic boundaries. The power is in the Spirit that indwells staff and service personnel who join hands in walking with the Lord."—*EMM News Service*

Mennonite giving to Goshen College increases

GOSHEN, Ind.—Increased giving from congregations and Mennonite supporters helped push 1999-2000 contributions to Goshen College to more than $7.8 million.

Giving from Mennonite individuals and families was more than $2.5 million, topping last year's figure by nearly 41 percent. Church contributions were $404,000, up about $10,000 from last year. The number of contributors also rose, increasing 1.2 percent from last year to nearly 6,300.

The college received more than $6 million for restricted projects, endowments and other special projects, including gifts and pledges for a new $22 million music building.

Contributions to Goshen last year set a record of $13.2 million., including $6 million in one-time, restricted Lilly Endowment grants.

Boxed in

Workers at Mennonite Central Committee's warehouse in Ephrata, Pa., load boxes of canned beef onto a container to be sent to North Korea. A total of 115,200 cans were sent from Ephrata and North Newton, Kan., which should arrive Aug. 21. The warming of relations between North and South Korea has prompted the U.S. government to relax requirements for trade with North Korea, making shipments such as MCC's easier.

FOOD FOR RELIEF

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Events

Franklin Conference annual meeting, Oct. 1, Chambersburg, Pa.

"Streams in the Desert," Oct. 6-8, a retreat for families touched by long-term mental illness, sponsored by Mennonite Mutual Aid. Contact Paul D. Leichty at 877-214-9838 or 219-825-5649; email <PDLeichty@cresources.org>.

Southeast Conference annual meeting, Oct. 6-8, Brooksville, Fla.

Mennonite Disaster Service Region I meeting, Oct. 14. Contact Bernard Martin, 540-434-1916.

Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, 40th anniversary celebration, Oct. 14-15. Contact 612-375-9483.

Workers

Acosta, Dionicio, Vineland, N.J., is beginning a three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Akron, Pa., as a service program administrator.

Bergen, Adela and Richard, workers in Senegal with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission, completed their term of service June 13.

Buhler, Abe and Chris, workers in Brazil with COM and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), completed their term of service May 17.

Franklin, David and Sandra, Akron, Pa., are beginning five-year MCC assignments in Botswana as country representatives.

Hostetter, Darrel and Sherill, Harrisonburg, Va., began July 3 as co-directors of the human resources department at Eastern Mennonite Missions.

Kennel, Sharon, Strang, Neb., was licensed April 30 as west regional minister for Iowa-Nebraska Conference.

Sawatsky, Etsuko and Russell, workers in Japan with COM and MBM, completed their term of service in June.

Scott, William L. Jr., Saginaw, Mich., is beginning a three-year MCC assignment with MCC Great Lakes as a local service program administrator.

Snyder, Kenneth and Mabel, Salem, Ore., are beginning 18-month MCC assignments in Laos as intern country representatives.

Births

Albright, Tanner Michael, July 9, to Jennifer and Mike Albright, Hutchinson, Kan.

Amack, Carson Tyler, July 8, to Jason and Shelly (Friesen) Amack, Lincoln, Neb.

Bigler, Alexandria Kay, June 23, to Adam and Jamie (Ritchie) Bigler, Goshen, Ind.

Bordner, Carson Wyatt, June 9, to Rick and Staci (Custer) Bordner, Fredericksburg, Pa.

Brubacher, Devin Maynard, May 23, to Laura (Kelley) and Steve Brubacher, Scottdale, Pa.

Coffman, Braden Allen, June 24, to Doug and Kim (Bialek) Coffman, Connellsville, Pa.

Dachtler, Olivia Marie, July 9, to Steve and Tina (Boller) Dachtler, Coralville, Iowa.

Dewey, Moira Alyn, June 16, to Esther Calderon and Brett Dewey, Pasadena, Calif.

Ford, Alexander Michael, July 11, to Michael and Rebecca (Gray) Ford, Tiskilwa, Ill.

Fuehrer, Sydney Leigh, July 7, to Cory and Jodi (Peters) Fuehrer, Creighton, Neb.

Gessinger, Whitney Lauren, June 21, to Brett and Kerri (VanderReyden) Gessinger, Goshen, Ind.

Godshall, Madilynn Brooke and Taylor Anne (twins), July 11, to Allen and Michelle (Binford) Godshall, Newport News, Va.

Goodheart, Daniel Michael, July 2, to Joan (Lehman) and Scott Goodheart, Castorland, N.Y.

Gordon, Jacob Bryant, July 7, to Jay and Kathy Gordon, Lansdale, Pa.

Gordon, McKenzie Grace, July 9, to Adrian and Cindy Gordon, Souderton, Pa.

Haring, Amber Lynn, July 14, to Jennifer (Hetrick) and Keith Haring, Macungie, Pa.

Hoffer, Rachel Ashleigh, June 26, to Kent and Melonica (Kauffman) Hoffer, Lancaster, Pa.

Illingworth, Burgenne Anna, June 6, to Christopher and Sheila (Beachy) Illingworth, North Pole, Alaska.

Keyser, Brock Alan, June 24, to Andrea (Stone) and Mark Keyser, New Castle, Pa.

Nickerson, Zackery Keith, July 9, to Elisha (Warner) and Kenny Nickerson, Sterling, Kan.

Peterson, Grant Mitchell, July 3, to Julie (Reber) and Scott Peterson, Phoenix.

Pickard, Dominick Lee, June 29, to Jeremy and Renea (Hershberger) Pickard, Fort Madison, Iowa.

Short, Joel Daniel, July 14 to Deb (Grieser) and Randy Short, West Unity, Ohio.

Shultz, Bethany Joye, July 11, to Regina (Moyer) and Ron Shultz, Powhatan, Va.

Sprunger, Benjamin Yoder, June 17, to Philip Sprunger and Elizabeth Yoder, Williamsport, Pa.

Stamm, Dakota Leigh, July 19, to Emily (Beck) and Kelsey Stamm, Archbold, Ohio.

Stauffer, Noah Robert, June 30, to Sandra (Litwiller) and Vince Stauffer, Milford, Neb.

Stout, Elysa Paige, July 17, to Bryan and Mindi (Landis) Stout, Telford, Pa.

Swartley, McKenzie Lauren, July 18, to Brian and Nichole (Calender) Swartley, Souderton, Pa.

Tinneny, Sean Robert, July 11, to Daniel and Lisa Tinneny, Lansdale, Pa.

Yoder, Morgan René, May 22, to Sheri Herr and Randall Yoder, Christiana, Pa.

Yoder, Rachel Marie, June 13, to Dean and Julie (Gehman) Yoder, Morwood, Pa.

Yutzy, Emily Ann, June 24, to Brian and Tammy (Miller) Yutzy, Hutchinson, Kan.

Marriages

Baker/Stutzman: Matthew Baker, Salem, Ore., and Tamara Stutzman, Salem, July 8 at Salem.

Brisendine/Burger: Brian Brisendine and Susan Burger, Perryton, Texas, July 15 at Perryton Mennonite Church.

Brubaker/Howard: Jerrel Brent Brubaker, Lewisburg, Pa., and Jennifer Jo Howard, Cedarville, Ohio, July 1 at Grace Baptist Church, Cedarville.

Bungard/Lehman: Ryan Bungard, Johnstown, Pa., and Karla Lehman, Davidsville, Pa., July 1 at Tire Hill, Pa.

Burkholder/Meinert: Curtis Burkholder, Goshen, Ind., and Amy Meinert, Wakarusa, Ind., July 8 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Carpenter/Shoemaker: Nicole Carpenter, Plain City, Ohio, and Jared Shoemaker, Plain City, June 24 at United Bethel Mennonite Church, Plain City.

Christner/Toppin: Robert Christner, Hesston, Kan., and Elizabeth Toppin, Berlin, N.J., July 8 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Kenosha, Wis.

Cline/Roth: Matt Cline, Staunton, Va., and Michelle Roth, Vienna, Va., June 10 at Vienna.

Cressman/Hershberger: Mark Cressman, Elmira, Ont., and Monica Hershberger, Elmira, July 15 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Deckert/Wirtz: Alan Deckert, Alsdorf-Hoengen, Germany, and Ursula Wirtz, Alsdorf-Hoengen, July 15 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Free/Hostetler: Jessica Free, Milford, Neb., and Chris Hostetler, Milford, July 1 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Friesen/Maltsberger: Tara Friesen, Henderson, Neb., and Matt Maltsberger, Pawnee, Okla., July 22 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Giron/Sirianni: Jim Giron, New Alexandria, Pa., and Nicky Sirianni, Pittsburgh, June 10 at New Alexandria.

Glase/Yoder: Kim Glase, Butte, Mont., and Denver Yoder, Plain City, Ohio, June 24 at Butte.

Graber/Kaufman: Heidi Graber, Nappanee, Ind., and Kevin Kaufman, Nappanee, July 15 at Mount Tabor Church, Etna Green, Ind.

Hawk/Warkentine: Marilyn Hawk, Larned, Kan., and David Warkentine, North Newton, Kan., July 1 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Heisner/Hooley: Donna Heisner, Washington, Iowa, and James Hooley, Wellman, Iowa, July 1 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.

Hull/Sherman: David Hull, Ostrander, Ohio, and Nicole Sherman, Milford Center, Ohio, July 1 at Sharon Mennonite Church, Plain City, Ohio.

Keefer/Woodhouse: Karen Keefer, Croghan, N.Y., and Brent Woodhouse, Lowville, N.Y., June 24 at First Mennonite Church, New Bremen, N.Y.

King/Wagner: Greg King, Naubinway, Mich., and Natasha Wagner, Engadine, Mich., July 1 at Saint Stephen Catholic Church, Naubinway.

Krouse/Philippsen: Kevin Krouse, Mishawaka, Ind., and Faye Philippsen, Mishawaka, July 8 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

Liechty/Miller: Jade Liechty, Berne, Ind., and Jill Miller, Hartville, Ohio, July 8 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Martin/Yoder: Alanna Martin, Chambersburg, Pa., and Eric Yoder, Chambersburg, June 24 at Chambersburg Mennonite Church.

Mast/Smith: Nevin Mast, Chesapeake, Va., and Christina Smith, Perkasie Pa., July 15 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Mink/Toth: Jessica Mink, Knoxville, Tenn., and Joseph Toth, June 24 at Knoxville Mennonite Church.

Nolt/Swannick: Brad Nolt, Souderton, Pa., and Susan Swannick, Souderton, July 1 at Souderton Mennonite Church.

Orlowska/Sandoval: Justyna Orlowska, Kitchener, Ont., and Arturo Sandoval, Kitchener, July 18 at First Mennonite Church, Kitchener.

Richer/Wyse: Chris Richer, West Unity, Ohio, and Julia Wyse, Camden, Mich., July 2 at Hillsdale, Mich.

Rush/Stover: Nathan Rush, Quakertown, Pa., and Tania Stover, Souderton, Pa., July 8 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

Schmuck/Weaver: Hannah Schmuck, Accident, Md., and Christopher Weaver, Goshen, Ind., June 24 at Cherry Glade Mennonite Church, Accident.

Deaths

Bartel, Marvin, 37, Gulph Mills, Pa., died July 10 of brain cancer. Spouse: Monica Zimmerman Bartel. Parents: Marvin and Martha Stoltzfus Bartel. Funeral: July 14 at Gap, Pa.

Beck, Donald, 79, Archbold, Ohio, died July 3. Spouse: Berneda Beck. Parents: Edward and Anna Beck (deceased). Other survivors: children Rex, Dianne Roth; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 6 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Diem, Arthur, 75, Lebanon, Pa., died June 27 of a heart attack. Spouse: Elsie Hershey Diem. Parents: Oscar and Mary Snader Diem (deceased). Other survivors: children Marian, Lois, Erma Bomberger, Kenneth, Brenda Livengood; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 30 at Gingrich Mennonite Church, Lebanon.

Dirks, Anna Rae, 57, North Newton, Kan., died July 9. Parents: Marvin and Frieda Albrecht Dirks (deceased). Funeral: July 15 at Kidron Bethel Village, North Newton.

Eby, Anna, 91, Lititz, Pa., died June 25. Parents: Frank and Fannie Stehman Eby (deceased). Funeral: June 28 at Landis Homes Chapel, Lititz.

Epp, Herman, 88, Henderson, Neb., died July 19. Spouse: Katherine Epp. Parents: John and Katherina Epp (deceased). Other survivors: children Darrell, Myron, Elvera, Shirley Ries; 14 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 23 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Esau, Harvey, 72, Beatrice Neb., died June 27. Spouse: Betty Esau. Parents: Adolph and Gertrude Penner Esau (deceased). Other survivors: children Don, J. Krase, Julie Grimmett; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 30 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Fluck, Stephen, 56, Quakertown, Pa., died July 9. Parents: John and Florence Hunsburger Fluck (deceased). Funeral: July 14 at Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown.

Frey, Ida Martin, 97, Chambersburg, Pa., died June 20. Spouse: John Frey (deceased). Parents: Amos and Lydia Kauffman Martin (deceased). Survivors: children Earl, Ruth Lehman, Mabel; 10 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 25 at Chambersburg Mennonite Church.

Friesen, Elizabeth Ann Ramer, 50, Standard, Alta., died June 28. Spouse: Ron Friesen. Parents: Clarence and Ethel Ramer (deceased). Other survivors: son Neil; one grandson. Funeral: July 4 at Duchess (Alta.) Mennonite Church.

Harris, Marietta, 92, Newport News, Va., died July 1. Parents: Herbert and Victoria Willoughby (deceased). Memorial service: July 5 at Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News.

Hartman, Ruth Burkholder, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 15. Spouse: Walter Hartman (deceased). Parents: Martin and Etta Burkholder (deceased). Survivors: stepchildren Floyd Hartman, Alta Terry, Ruby Whitelaw, Juanita McMullen; three stepgrandchildren; five stepgreat-grandchildren; four stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 18 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Haverstick, Mabel Strickler, 92, Lancaster, Pa., died July 5. Spouse: Mylin Haverstick. Parents: Amos and Annie Gambler Strickler (deceased). Other survivors: children Stanley, James, Jay, Anna Kreider, Joanne Harnish, Vivian Hunt, Glenda Hoffer; 12 grandchildren, 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 8 at Byerland Mennonite Church, Willow Street, Pa.

Hess, Jacob, 81, Millersville, Pa., died July 4. Spouse: Mary Hess. Parents: Christian and Mary Hess (deceased). Other survivors: children Paul, Jacob, Rhoda Stoner, David, Martha Clymer, Daniel, Mary Bell, Lois Nafziger, Rachel, Joseph, Esther Jackson; 33 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 8 at New Danville Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Hilty, Lawrence, 87, Pandora Ohio, died July 18. Spouse: Marjorie Nafziger Hilty. Parents: Albert and Elizabeth Welty Hilty (deceased). Other survivors: children Lawrence Jr., Jonathan, Daniel, David, Ruth Welty, Cathy Reichenbach; 23 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; six great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 21 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Jost, Esther Ruth Goosen, 81, Hilliard, Ohio, died June 30 of a stroke. Spouse: Arthur Jost (deceased). Survivors: children David, Timothy, John; five grandchildren. Funeral: July 2 at Columbus (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

King, Jacob Samuel, 64, Telford, Pa., died July 6. Spouse: Mary Ann Yoder King. Funeral: July 10 at Boyertown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Krabill, Lydia Belle Yoder, 93, West Liberty, Ohio, died June 25. Spouse: Ferman Krabill (deceased). Parents: Jay Oliver and Lydia Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Jerry, Jane Wilson; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: June 28 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Landes, Florence, 99, Souderton, Pa., died June 17. Funeral: June 21 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.

Leichty, Leona Rachel Miller, 93, Wayland, Iowa, died June 20. Spouse: Henry Leichty (deceased). Parents: Amasa and Katie Reschly Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Ed, Ellis, Lois Hochstetler, Calvin, Marion, Richard, Dwight, Larry, Royce, Wesley, Doris Mullet, Douglas; 34 grandchildren; 55 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 23 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Maust, Claude, 80, Springs, Pa., died July 9 of a stroke. Parents: Norman and Mayme Kimmel Maust (deceased). Funeral: July 12 at Springs.

Maust, Erma Longenecker, 89, Lititz, Pa., died July 14. Spouse: Herbert Maust (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Annie Lehman Longenecker (deceased). Survivors: children John, James, Miriam Achenbach, David; 12 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 18 at Good Mennonite Church, Elizabethtown, Pa.

Miller, Charlene Yoder, 49, Kalona, Iowa, died July 15 of cancer. Parents: Paul and Ila Yoder. Other survivors: children Kina, Kera. Funeral: July 18 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Naffziger, Roy Daniel, 74, Harper, Kan., died June 26 from lung fibrosis. Spouse: Phoebe Schroeder Naffziger (deceased). Parents: Joseph and Nora Mast Naffziger (deceased). Survivors: children Delaine Moncado, Dorothy Cloud, Martha Ediger, Ronda Gonzalez; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: June 28 at Crystal Springs Mennonite Church, Harper.

Neff, Ronda, 37, Shipshewana, Ind., died July 17 of cancer. Parents: Elmer and Martha Lou Atwater Neff. Funeral: July 20 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Roten, Gertrude Wiebe, 79, Elkhart, Ind., died July 10. Spouse: Paul Roten (deceased). Parents: Henry and Eliese Regier Wiebe (deceased). Survivors: children Renee, Paul Lyman; four grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Memorial service: July 14 at Sermon on the Mount Chapel, Elkhart.

Thomas, David, 81, Lancaster, Pa., died July 11 of leukemia. Spouse: Edith Thomas. Parents: Jacob and Mary Neff Thomas (deceased). Other survivors: children Elsie Hess, David, Melvin, Ann Risser, James, Paul, Daniel, Samuel, Becky Noll, Rachel Pellman; 24 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 15 at New Danville Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Troyer, Samuel Earl, 79, West Liberty, Ohio, died June 28. Spouse: Madeline Plank Troyer. Parents: Noah and Eva Mae Allgyer Troyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Steve, Anita Robison, Lori Cramer; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 30 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio.

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classifieds

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks full-time ***Spanish teacher*** and full-time ***social studies teacher*** to begin as soon as possible. Contact Marlene Brubaker, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

- **Friendship Community**, Lititz, Pa., is actively seeking applicants for the ***program supervisor*** position. If you are interested in assisting adults with mental disabilities, call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466 ext. 102; email <amy.horst@friendship-comm.org>. Christian mission. EOE

- **Providence Mennonite Church**, Newport News, Va., is hosting a ***centennial celebration, Oct. 7-8, 2000***. Request registration forms before Sept. 1 from Providence Centennial Committee, 13101 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, VA 23602; 757-249-2702; fax 757-881-9709; email <pmcnn@aol.com>.

- **Goshen City Church of the Brethren**, Goshen, Ind., seeks full-time ***additional staff*** to assist in areas of community outreach, young adult and youth ministries, contemporary worship and Christian education. Bachelor degree minimum.

  Contact Northern Indiana District Office, 219-773-3149.

- **Opportunities for service!** Eastern Mennonite Missions has current ***medical opportunities*** as follows: an experienced doctor for Nepal, a doctor for Albania and a nurse and/or doctor for Guatemala.

  If you have interest in exploring any of these or other current opportunities for youth to adult, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** welcomes applicants for ***K-8 music teacher*** (teacher certification preferred). Come teach in warm supportive school community! Find out more about HMS at <http://home.ptd.net/~hmsstaff>.

  Send resumes to: Tom Burnett, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705; email inquiries <tburnett@ptd.net> also encouraged.

- **Bay Shore Mennonite Church**, Sarasota, Fla., is seeking a full-time ***minister of youth***. Candidates should have a deep appreciation of Anabaptist beliefs and a strong commitment to see youth follow Christ.

  Please contact or send resume to: Wayne Lambright, P.O. Box 7093, Sarasota, FL 34278; email <wlambright@aol.com>.

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, a small, dedicated congregation located next to the University of Florida in Gainesville, is seeking a full-time ***pastor*** and/or an interim pastor. North central Florida offers a vibrant cultural life and a wide range of outdoor activities.

  Contact Fred Brenneman, Search Committee Chair, 352-372-6721; or email <brenhms@aol.com>.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has two openings for single people for ***one-year voluntary service assignments*** (begin dates Sept. 1 and November).

  For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Kidron Bethel Village**, a retirement community of 260 residents in North Newton, Kan., seeks a ***director of development*** to oversee fund-raising activities, planned giving, public relations and church relations. Candidates should be creative, highly motivated, possess strong interpersonal and communication skills. Previous experience in fund development and three years management experience preferred.

  Send resumes to Richard Heim, President/CEO, 3001 Ivy Drive, North Newton, KS 67117; email <richh@kidronbethel.org>.

- **Valleyview Mennonite Church**, London, Ont., invites applications for a full-time ***pastor*** beginning Jan. 1, 2001. We are an urban congregation with an average attendance of 100 and growing. The pastor will serve as a spiritual mentor, emphasize preaching, lead in worship, provide visitation and work with youth and young adults.

  Please direct inquiries to Lester Kehl, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, 4489 King St. E., Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2.

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Project Manager

MMA is seeking a project manager to lead system development projects and develop information systems. Requires a bachelor's degree, leadership/planning/organizational skills, three to five years experience in systems development, plus experience in project leadership.

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MMA is seeking a software developer to analyze, design, develop and/or purchase business software for our AS/400 and PC-LAN environment. The right person for this job will have or will be completing a bachelor's degree in an area such as management information systems, business, finance, accounting, computer science, mathematics, etc. This person will also possess strong skills in such areas as working with people, communications, planning, organizing and leadership potential. Two to five years of related experience is preferred. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply.

Send or fax resume to:
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Goshen, IN 46527
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Associate director
Starting date: **January 5, 2001**
Key qualifications: **Ability and strong interest in helping MCC volunteers adapt to life and work in Bangladesh.**

Staff development director
Starting date: **Immediately**
Key qualifications: **Ability to design and set in place staff development program, including policies, procedures and structure.**

Direct inquiries to:
Charmayne Brubaker or Becky Stahly, MCC Human Resources Dept., PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501
phone 717-859-1151,
fax 717-859-2171,
email cdb@mcc.org
or rss@mcc.org

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

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- **Slate Hill Mennonite Church**, Camp Hill, Pa., seeks a full-time ***lead pastor***. The gift of effective preaching is essential. Experience and seminary training are desirable. Must be committed to Anabaptist understandings of faith. Slate Hill is a medium-sized, suburban, well-established Lancaster Conference congregation close to Harrisburg.

  Inquiries/resumes to Rosalie Roland, 337 West Meadow Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055; email <wlroland@aol.com>; 717-697-8650; fax 717-697-5889.

- **Sharing Programs, Inc.**, Lancaster, Pa., a property/casualty mutual aid program, seeks ***sales and marketing manager*** to lead sales, marketing and member services functions. Requires strong managerial skills, experience in sales, marketing and long-range planning. Experience in property/casualty insurance industry desired.

  Send resume to: Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367; email <hr@splmc.com>. Visit <www.sharingprograms.com>.

- **Camp Hebron** has the following positions available:

  Reservation clerk: Primary responsibility for reservations and group bookings for year-round retreat ministry. Must be organized, able to handle multiple details and have a positive and pleasant phone manner.

  Head cook: Oversees preparation, serving and cleanup of meals for camp and retreat groups.

  All staff must be able to serve on ministry team. Send resume and cover letter to Lanny Millette, Camp Hebron, 957 Camp Hebron Road, Halifax, PA 17032.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is seeking ***Mennonite Foundation representatives*** to develop and enhance relationships with people in Ohio and eastern Pennsylvania. The foundation provides planned giving support to established donor constituency and charitable institutions. People with financial planning, accounting, sales or legal training are encouraged to apply. Limited overnight travel required. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Please submit letter of interest and resume to: MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264; <www.mma-online.org>.

- **Mennonite Health Services** seeks applicants for an ***executive-level position***. The position is half-time as executive director for a new alliance of church-related retirement communities in southeastern Pennsylvania and half-time as a vice president with Mennonite Health Services. Responsibilities include representing MHS in the eastern United States, planning and implementing programs and services. Qualified candidates will have executive experience, strong communication skills, a proven ability to pursue opportunity and will be committed to an Anabaptist faith perspective.

  Send resume and inquiries by Aug. 15 to Rick Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St., Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; or call 1-800-611-4007.

- **Foothills Mennonite Church**, Calgary, Alta., seeks a full-time ***associate pastor***. Our hope is that the associate pastor, along with parents, church leaders and the wider congregation, will create a nurturing environment where children and youth are encouraged and challenged to commit to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and a lifelong service to his church. We seek a person with a growing and visible faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior who is committed to the church as expressed in the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.

  For more information, please contact Pastor Search Committee, 2115 Urbana Rd. NW, Calgary, AB T2N 4B9; 403-289-7172; fax 403-210-2209; email <FoothillsMennonite@attglobal.net>.

- **Call for papers:** An interdisciplinary, international study conference on ***"The Amish, Old Orders and the Media,"*** sponsored by the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, will be held June 14-16, 2001, at Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pa. The conference will explore professional, ethical and academic issues in depicting and reporting about plain-dress Anabaptist and Pietist groups. Proposals for papers or for thematic sessions from media professionals and academic researchers are encouraged. Deadline is Oct. 20, 2000.

  For more information, contact Prof. David Eller, the Young Center, One Alpha Drive, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA 17022; 727-361-1470; email <youngctr@etown.edu>.

Fireworks of force, not freedom

by John Ross Buschert

On Independence Day I did not go to see the fireworks. I am too much aware of a different fireworks display going right now on the beautiful island of Vieques off the coast of Puerto Rico.

The Vieques fireworks are not a show to celebrate freedom but the U.S. Navy's bombardment of the island, which shakes people's homes, threatens their health, killed a civilian security guard in April 1999 and powerfully reminds residents that although they are U.S. citizens, they are not free.

The Navy expropriated the land from the Vieques people during World War II. About 10,000 people now live in the center of the island, surrounded by a munitions storage area and a bombing range for the Navy's prime Atlantic Fleet.

I spent a week on the 21-mile-long island in May with a delegation from Christian Peacemaker Teams, a Mennonite and Brethren organization committed to "getting in the way"—challenging systems of domination and exploitation, as Jesus Christ did in the first century. We joined local Christian leaders camping in the military zone, whose protests had stopped the bombing for a year.

Local leaders feared the U.S. government would soon act to clear the way for a resumption of the military exercises. They were right.

While we were there, U.S. marshals came and removed the protesters, including me. Despite continued protests and the arrest of another 183 protesters the last week of June—that makes more than 600 arrests overall—the bombing resumed on Vieques.

President Clinton issued a directive allowing the Navy to choose, in three years, the manner and timing of a referendum on whether or not the bombing should cease, but in the meantime the bombs fall.

The Viequense people keep going back into the bombing area. Every few days another group of 20 or 50 enters the Navy land.

In May, after a year of no bombing, some limited plant life was returning to the impact zone. Even so, such a slow recovery gives credence to the concerns that the soil is contaminated by 60 years of bombardment.

Sadly, that soil is now being bombed again. Though the Navy now is using "nonexplosive" bombs, such missiles still create a plume of dust that is carried by the prevailing winds toward the civilian sector.

The Viequense people camped on the bombing range worked together in many ways, but the most dramatic sight was an ecumenical chapel built by Protestants, Catholics and Pentecostals.

CPT photo

On the beach: Protesters at Vieques pray for the federal marshal who has come to arrest them.

As far as I know, the chapel remains. Perhaps it will be bombed or dismantled. But the spirit it represents will live on, a spirit of nonviolent resistance by the people of Vieques—not merely "anti-military flower children," as one writer dubbed us, but protesters from all ranks of Puerto Rican society: doctors, teachers, fishermen, lawyers, priests and pastors, electrical workers, politicians, leaders and ordinary people from all walks of life. We North American "mainlanders" were a small minority.

In contrast to the violent revolution celebrated by our country, the Vieques protesters are following the nonviolent way of Jesus, Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr., carrying on their revolution through civil disobedience.

Nonviolence need not be passive, however. From their hilltop camp in the bombing zone, I heard how Carlos Zenon, a 62-year-old fisherman, had stopped a bombing run by getting out of his boat and running up a hill into the path of the bombs. Later he and other fishermen were again putting their boats in the way of the Navy's assault.

In May, when the leader of the federal marshals burst into our circle of prayer on the beach in the bombing zone, our leaders laid hands on him and prayed for him and for the armed men who had come to take us away.

President Clinton's directive allows the Navy to remain for three years, even if the people vote them out. And during those years, concrete-filled bombs will continue to drop, shaking homes, destroying wildlife and reminding the people who controls their lives. Although Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, they do not have the right to vote for our next president, who could decide the fate of the island.

It is time for our government to stop being a colonial power. The U.S. Navy should cease its operations immediately, clean up its mess and return Vieques to its rightful owners. Such actions would be a true celebration of independence.

It is time for our government to stop being a colonial power. The U.S. Navy should cease its operations immediately, clean up its mess and return Vieques to its rightful owners.

John Ross Buschert is associate professor of physics at Goshen (Ind.) College.

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Cheryl Zehr Walker

Men of motion and an outstanding crew

Lorne Peachey and Everett Thomas have been good friends a long time. More than friends, they are spiritual companions. They give time and effort to helping each other hear and follow the voice of God.

It's a wonderful coincidence that Everett should succeed Lorne as editor of *The Mennonite*. Lorne's final editorial appeared in the last issue; Everett begins work in November.

It would be difficult to find another example of friends guiding a church periodical, one after the other. Yet both Everett and Lorne are uniquely qualified for the role: Both have served God through the Mennonite church for many years; both have gifts of communication and leadership; both exhibit vision and energy.

Lorne and Everett are men of motion.

Lorne's favorite mode of recreational transport is a bicycle. He's famous for his near-daily multimile treks (with his cell phone along, so staff can reach him any time, anywhere). He says this activity is important for both his physical and emotional health.

In Kansas City, Kan., in May, at meetings of the Interim Periodical Board (which oversees *The Mennonite*) and the Constituency Leadership Council, we said thank you to Lorne for his service through *The Mennonite* and his gifts to the church. Lorne had done the numbers: In 30 years of church journalism, he had produced 725 different issues of four magazines—*With*, *Christian Living*, *Gospel Herald* and *The Mennonite*. He wrote about 650 editorials, edited countless manuscripts, designed countless pages, attended countless meetings. He says he is "the most fortunate church journalist who ever lived" to have begun two magazines (*With* and *The Mennonite*) that are still operating. He was a pastor to many readers.

Until November, Lorne will serve as editor of *The Mennonite* in an advisory capacity. He will review the magazine before it is printed and will counsel staff as needed. After that, Lorne begins a dual role as director of communications for Sharing Programs (an automobile and property aid agency affiliated with Lancaster Conference) and with Pennsylvania Mennonite Federal Credit Union. We will miss him.

In this transition, the other staff of *The Mennonite* will move the magazine forward. Dotty Anderson, Marla Cole, Gordon Houser, Merrill Miller, Melanie Mueller and Rich Preheim (see their titles under the masthead on page 3) have the skills and creativity to continue to produce a meaningful publication (Lorne calls them a top-of-the-line staff to work with). Especially in recent months, as Lorne and his wife, Emily, battled her cancer, staff members have shown their mettle.

Everett is a sailor—happiest, he says, when he is aboard a boat with his wife, Barbara. Lorne has sailed with Everett many times and has learned from him the basics of navigation. Everett instructed Lorne early on that a captain is in danger if he falls off the boat and there is no one left on board with the skill to turn the boat around, pick him up and get back on course.

Soon Everett will take a different helm; the process of friends learning from each other will continue. Everett has accepted a call to serve the people of Mennonite Church USA at an important juncture in our history. His enthusiasm, skills and focus on relationships will bring continued life to *The Mennonite*.

When Everett begins work this fall, *The Mennonite* will add a location in Goshen, Ind., to the current offices in Newton, Kan., and Scottdale, Pa. The new office will be located in the Archives of the Mennonite Church, at the southeast corner of the Goshen College campus. Representatives of the archives and the college have been most welcoming as arrangements are being made.

Through all these changes, I am grateful to the readers of *The Mennonite* for your interest and support. You enable the magazine to continue as one of the only nonsubsidized denominational publication in North America. Thank you for your prayers, encouragement and constructive criticism; your letters, articles, poems, photos and artwork; your subscriptions and your donations.

With vigorous, faithful leadership, an outstanding group effort and your participation, *The Mennonite* will continue to help readers "glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world."—*czw*

Through all these changes, I am grateful to the readers of *The Mennonite* for your interest and support.

Cheryl Zehr Walker is chair of the Interim Periodical Board and director of communications at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

the Mennonite

August 15, 2000

slow down

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

A liberty worth protecting

I had the opportunity to attend the eighth International Conference for War Tax Resistance and Peace Tax Campaigns in Washington in July. It was great to learn about the effort to allow conscientious objection status for taxpayers who don't want half their tax money to feed the U.S. military budget. Marian Franz, executive director of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, made arrangements for the group to meet with officials inside the State Department, Capitol and Pentagon.

While I did meet a few Mennonites at the conference, I often asked, "Why aren't there more Mennonites here?" There are two reasons, I think, that Mennonites should support the Peace Tax Fund in broader numbers. First, it is a matter of integrity to see the consistency between not paying for war and not fighting. The conference motto stated, "We assert the right not to participate in war, whether that participation is financial or physical."

Second, the Peace Tax Fund bill is framed as a matter of religious liberty. This combination of peace with freedom for religious expression goes back to our Anabaptist foundations. Ironically, most of the 80 religious groups supporting the Peace Tax Fund do not represent pacifist traditions, yet they keenly understand that the right to not pay for war is a religious liberty worth protecting.

Let's not wait for a major, overt war to exercise our consciences.—*Ted Lewis, Eugene, Ore.*

Thinking of killing

Some thoughts on the subject of David Whettstone's article, "Don't Kill for Us" (July 25):

Whenever I see another poll indicating that 70 percent to 80 percent of the people in the United States support the death penalty, it makes me sad. Captial punishment has been abolished in every other industrialized nation in the free world. We stand alone. Through the years, evidence has shown that the death penalty has never been a deterrent. Centuries ago in England, even thieves were often sentenced to death. In those days, hangings were a public spectacle and would draw large crowds, where pickpockets had some of their most profitable days.

Jesus taught us to be merciful, to love others and forgive their sins. He didn't make an exception and say, "Unless they have killed someone." I believe that most Christians agree that murderers can be forgiven. But according to the polls, there must be many who believe in forgiving and at the same time believe in capital punishment. This leads me to the question: When do we forgive? Before or after we kill them?—*Edgar Stevanus, Sugarcreek, Ohio*

Creationism not possible

I would like to respond to Fred Kanagy's letter about creationism (Readers Say, July 25). The belief that the Earth is billions of years old is not just a bunch of hooey; it has to be true. I took a class in physical geology last fall. We did not discuss evolution—that is a topic for biology. We did, however, briefly discuss the origins of the physical universe. The bottom line is that it is simply impossible, given what we know about geology, fossil records and the physical attributes of the planet, for the Earth to be less than several billion years old. Unless, of course, you wish to suggest that God sped up the aging process the Earth has undergone so drastically as to make billions of years worth of fossil records, rock layers, erosion and so forth appear within a week, and then decided to leave it alone after humans were created and let things continue on a normal geologic time scale. This undermines the other basic thing I learned in geology: The processes currently occurring on the Earth have always occurred and at the same rate.

Can we agree that time is not the same to God as to us? Why should we be expected to take the seven days in Genesis as a literal seven days? My personal theory—which I am not alone in holding—is that it stands to reason that each "day" in Genesis could have been millions of years. How else, besides the "fake aging process theory," would you explain the dinosaurs and other prehistoric animals that could not possibly have been alive while any humans were?

We cannot usurp common sense with a literalist view of the entire Bible. Of course, this is just my humbly informed opinion. You are free to disagree. But do not be surprised if you are labeled misinformed at some point in your life. —*Renita Leichty, Middlebury, Ind.*

Homicidal nomenclature

To John Stoner (Readers Say, July 18): Your wordsmithing—i.e. "selective homicidal behavior"—was mind-catching, but it would have helped me if you had just said "capital punishment." Or did you mean abortion, or maybe euthanasia, or perhaps membership of active military personnel? Whatever "selective homicidal behavior" you refer to, I hope you call us to talk about it more openly. However, I strug-

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y readers say

gle if your argument is that we shouldn't talk about "selective homosexual behavior" since there is some other important issue about which we aren't talking. Such argument, pushed to its conclusion, tends toward nihilism, the doctrine that all belief is worthless and that therefore existence is meaningless. Please, John, talk to us about our sinful approval of "selective homicidal behavior." I don't think you want to be part of a church that, in the face of moral disagreement, routinely says, "OK, whatever." I know I don't.—*Kurt Horst, Somerset, Pa.*

By the Book

Re Hartzel Schmidt (Readers Say, July 4): Only liberal biblical scholars make Genesis 1 and 2 two different accounts. They are the same account emphasizing different aspects of creation. Again, the different versions of the Ten Commandments present different emphases.

According to the Americana Encyclopedia, Augustus and Quirinius were contemporaries. Augustus died in A.D. 14. Quirinius was consul in Rome in 12 B.C. During the next 14 years he subdued Hamanadenses in Galatia. He traveled to Judea in A.D. 6 to enroll and assess taxes, which is a problem. But Luke 2:2 says that when Mary and Joseph went, it was the first census, indicating there were others. There is no reason to doubt Luke's account.

I will take the Bible as my authority and will study it to discern acceptable lifestyles. My prayer for the church is the same as Paul's in Philippians 1:9-10: "That your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ." I think God has a good memory, and I want to have lived by the Book when the books are opened.—*James Mullet, Guernsey, Sask.*

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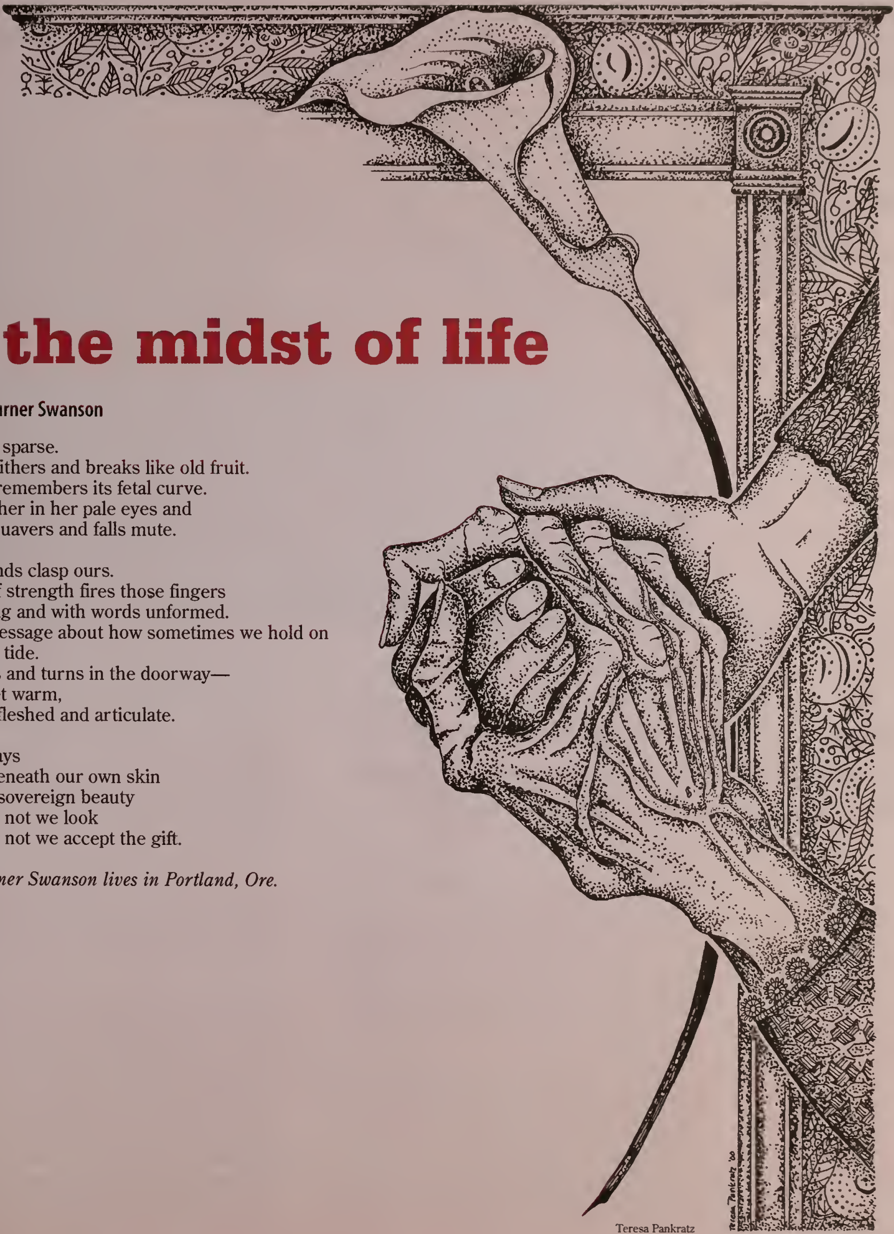

Teresa Pankratz

In the midst of life

by Wendy Turner Swanson

Her hair is sparse.
Her skin withers and breaks like old fruit.
Her spine remembers its fetal curve.
Clouds gather in her pale eyes and
her voice quavers and falls mute.

Yet her hands clasp ours.
A thread of strength fires those fingers
with longing and with words unformed.
One last message about how sometimes we hold on
against the tide.
She pauses and turns in the doorway—
her skin yet warm,
her bones fleshed and articulate.

On such days
the skull beneath our own skin
unveils its sovereign beauty
whether or not we look
whether or not we accept the gift.

Wendy Turner Swanson lives in Portland, Ore.

Vada Snider

Patience
the endangered virtu

Our pursuit of shortcuts without the practice of patience will short-circuit our spiritual lives.

by Shelley Cataldo

My friend Patty exults about her cell phone: "I'm saving so much time. I don't have to wait until I get home to talk to people; I can call them on the way." Patty is one of an estimated 70 million American cell-phone users who no longer have to wait until they get from Point A to Point B to make the appointment, close the deal or order the pizza.

Americans are obsessed with speed and convenience. If someone invents a tool, appliance or system to do something faster than it was done before, we'll buy it. We're saving time, but in the process we're losing patience. Some would shrug: "No big loss." Most of us secretly think patience is a rather boring virtue, anyway. Waiting is boring. We can't wait. We'd rather have it now.

Americans are obsessed with speed and convenience. If someone invents a tool, appliance or system to do something faster than it was done before, we'll buy it.

So we talk on our cell phones as we zoom down the highways, always looking for that faster route, the shortcut. Our response to the senior citizen moseying along at the speed limit is often to grind our teeth in impatience until we can zip around him with a snarl and a dirty look.

America enjoys an abiding love affair with the drive-thru. (It's always spelled "thru." Are we too impatient to add the extra letters?) For a long time we have taken for granted drive-thru banks and fast-food restaurants, and we even complain if it takes too long in the drive-thru. Drive-thru cleaners and pharmacies have been joined by drive-thru lumberyards, liquor stores and Java-to-Go. Las Vegas offers drive-thru weddings. In Chicago, Detroit and other cities, drive-thru funerals are an option. The deceased is placed next to a drive-up window or visitors can pay their respects by pulling up to a remote television screen.

Those of us who grew up in the 1950s have absorbed a reverence for the instant. We heard our parents exclaim rapturously about instant coffee, instant pudding, instant cameras, instant houses. Television brought instant images from far away into our living rooms. The first fast-food restaurants gave us popular cuisine without the wait.

Instant replay: We came to expect the fast to get faster. First came the Instamatic, then came the Polaroid, then came the camcorder. Our mothers were tickled with TV dinners; we take for granted the microwave oven. Our fathers were happy just to be able to watch sports on TV; we weren't happy until we got the instant replay.

Now most of us have personal computers and email to make our information-gathering swifter and more convenient. Computer processing speed doubles about every two years, and we follow along: "My computer is so slow. I'm going to have to upgrade again."

In his book *Data Smog: Surviving the Information Glut*, David Shenk writes: "We often feel life is going by much, much faster than we wish, as we are carried forward from meeting to meeting, call to call, errand to errand. … If life were a cartoon, as it sometimes seems to be, we would be the breathless Wile E. Coyote, forever chasing the Road Runner but never concluding the chase."

According to Shenk, "There is a psychic consequence to this blistering pace. When Americans tell pollsters and therapists that they feel they are losing control over the basic structures of their lives, it's partly because they are. The ferocious upgrading of the machinery all around us undermines our sense of security and continuity."

Time-saving devices surround us. We should be saving lots of time. What are we doing with all the time we're saving? What are we saving it for? Is there a rainy day or a time bank somewhere where all the time we saved is being stored? Everyone I know talks about

Increasing our patience capacity can work wonders for our relationships with our partners, children and friends. It can also improve our relationships with ourselves and with God.

how busy and hurried their lives are, how they don't have enough time. What did they do with all that time they saved by using their remotes to change the channels instead of walking across to the TV?

While we moderns consider patience to be a passive virtue, the men and women of the Bible waited in more active ways. They waited expectantly, actively looking for God: "Walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you" (Isaiah 26:8 NIV). "Wait for the Lord; be strong and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord" (Psalm 27:14). They waited with hope: "I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me" (Micah 7:7).

Waiting for God: Viewing life as a place where God is about to act is different from viewing it as a series of delays we have to tolerate or avoid on the way to getting what we want. Waiting for God could mean that I really look at the bark of a tree near my car as I'm stopped for a train, considering that bark as God's handiwork, considering God. Waiting for God could mean that I list things I appreciate in my life as I stand in the express lane ("12 items or less," no waiting).

Patience in the New Testament often means enduring, continuing, persevering. Frequently used in partnership with sufferings and trials, patience is often mentioned as having payoffs.

Eugene Peterson paraphrases Romans 5:3-5: "We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged. Quite the contrary—we can't round up enough containers to hold everything God generously pours into our lives through the Holy Spirit!"

Peterson paraphrases James 1:4: "Don't try to get out of anything prematurely. Let it do its work so you become mature and well-developed, not deficient in any way." And in his paraphrase of Galatians 5:5, a payoff from patience is "a willingness to stick with things."

Psychologists use the term "delayed gratification" to make a similar point. M. Scott Peck in *The Road Less Traveled* defines delayed gratification as choosing to "schedule the pain and pleasure of life … to enhance the pleasure by

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Instead of listening to the still, small voice of God in our spirits, we've been listening to the drumbeat of the world.

Marilyn Nolt

meeting and experiencing the pain first and getting it over with."

For those of us who are used to getting what we want when we want it, delayed gratification is painful. But Peck calls this choice "the only decent way to live." Among its many benefits, practicing delayed gratification in our relationships with ourselves and others will cause all of us to grow in love.

"When we love something, it is of value to us, and when something is of value to us we spend time with it, time enjoying it and time taking care of it," writes Peck. Increasing our patience capacity can work wonders for our relationships with our partners, children and friends. But can it improve our relationships with ourselves and with God?

Perhaps one reason we're unwilling to let go of our fast pace is that we're afraid to be alone with ourselves. Maybe we're afraid we'll find that there's nobody there, that the center of us is as empty as the hole in a doughnut. Instead of listening to the still, small voice of God in our spirits, we've been listening to the drumbeat of the world.

In the galley ships of ancient times, the slaves rowed in time to a drumbeat. When the captain wanted the slaves to row faster, he would order the drumbeat to be gradually increased. The drumbeat to which we row has been speeding up steadily throughout our lives. Rowing along with the drumbeat is easier and less painful; however, that means we stay slaves.

I'm not advocating tossing out our microwaves in favor of woodstoves. We can cultivate patience in other ways. We can turn down (if not off) the volume of the drumbeat. Each of us can find exercises that work to build our own particular patience muscles. My workouts include the following:

Traveling a different route. The fastest route between my house and work is a highway that sets the drumbeat pounding furiously in me. Now I get up a few minutes earlier and purposely drive a slower, winding road (which has better scenery) that forces me to keep my speed lower and frequently puts me behind slowpoke drivers. What a powerful practice for my patience these unhurried folks are!

Avoiding television whenever possible. I'm not as churned up by the programs as I am by the pace of television. The rapid-fire images, the sound bites, the prefabricated intensity of TV disquiets me. Radio (especially National Public Radio) makes me think, imagine and learn.

Collecting bits of life. On my new, more leisurely way to work, I now have the opportunity to observe the world with senses that seem to have been renewed. I bought a handheld tape recorder and I often speak my observations into it, playing it back in the evening and writing these bits of life into a notebook. My "life collection" includes an image of a rickety old man hobbling down the street with a child's cowboy hat on his head, the smell of a passing train (maybe I just imagined that it smelled like faraway places?) and the primeval cry of a heron. I find I am looking expectantly for God in this life, and I am finding God.

Playing with kids. I've started volunteering to spend time with at-risk kids once a week at my church. I want to communicate to them that they have value, and the best way I know to do that is to spend time with them. For the hour and a half I spend playing games, making crafts and praying with them, I'm energized and satisfied, and I have definitely exercised my patience muscles.

When we're on a trip, my husband and I love taking back roads instead of interstates. Every time we do, we see the America that was left behind when progress and speed swept through. Weed-buried railroad tracks pass through once-bustling little towns that now are not seen at all if you blink at the wrong moment. More sad and forgotten-looking than picturesque, these towns remind me of what I can become spiritually if my pursuit of short cuts is not balanced with the practice of patience.

I'll probably never own a cell phone. I won't completely abandon the art of letter-writing in favor of email. I will consciously attempt to drive more slowly. On the other hand, I will probably drive through a fast-food restaurant from time to time, and will continue to heat instant coffee in my microwave. Most importantly, I will actively wait for the God "who acts on behalf of those who wait for him" (Isaiah 64:4 NIV).

Shelley Cataldo lives in Elkhart, Ind.

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Zinnias in Brazil

Intentional flower-planting became a symbol of survival and adornment.

by Dorothy Nickel Friesen

Nine of us North Americans were tramping in the hilly fields in northwestern Brazil in late March. A warm sun and gracious farmers marked the morning. Our guide, a woman in her 70s, walked too fast for most of us who were following her unmarked path.

We started near the schoolhouse and proceeded up a winding path through small plots of beans and corn. Suddenly we were at her home, surveying a large shed. She pointed to a pile of manioc on the ground. Tubers resembling sweet potatoes stood three feet high in front of a press. Proudly she cranked the small engine to demonstrate the operation, but it repeatedly sputtered and died. Finally, her husband, who had been watching this motley group of foreigners from the safety of his porch, came to give his hand to the crank. His bare, leathery back was a deep bronze color. With his simple, quick action, the motor came to life, and our group cheered his accomplishments. In Portuguese the woman said, "I primed it well," and we laughed when the translator told us her quip.

We saw how the manioc was pressed, then heated in a huge open vat over a fire and ground into manioc flour. The process involved back-breaking work—from bending over to dig the manioc to lifting pails of pressed mush to stirring over a hot cauldron to pounding it into flour—all the work mostly done by hand. The entire family, from young children to grandparents, worked in the process, and all looked thin and wiry.

"Would you like to see my house?" our guide said.

"Of course," we said. We tramped farther up the hill. The simple structure had four rooms, a red tile roof, a dirt floor and few furnishings. Windows were protected with bars but no screens. A small stove, a table, several chairs, an old couch and a bed were the only pieces of furniture.

"Would you like to taste my beans?" the woman said.

Of course, we would be pleased to taste her food, we told her. She found glasses of assorted colors and sizes and poured a small amount of hot red bean juice into each one. We could hardly hold the glasses because of the boiling contents but we sipped the tangy mixture. She shared it with everyone, offering second helpings to the brave. This, no doubt, represented her supper meal, perhaps several meals, but she kept dipping into the simmering bean pot, offering more and more.

Marilyn Nolt

We exited her home with repeated thanks. A few chickens ran freely; a dog and several scrawny kittens played in the sunshine. It was then I saw the zinnias. Zinnias grew in neat rows around her front door.

When we North Americans traveled to Brazil to visit Mennonite Central Committee project sites, we saw urban and rural situations that overwhelmed us. We saw pervasive poverty, sparse conditions, places lacking basic necessities. We struggled with questions of justice and hope. We analyzed the systems of farming, marketing and consuming. Yet we saw evidence of incredible strength amid overwhelming odds. Beauty knows no income level. Intentional flower-planting became a symbol of survival and adornment.

That is what serving in the name of Christ is like. We become neighbors with strangers and new life blooms in places we have never known. Even now, I will keep looking for zinnias in North America, too.

That is what serving in the name of Christ is like. We become neighbors with strangers and new life blooms in places we have never known.

Dorothy Nickel Friesen is pastor of First Mennonite Church, Bluffton, Ohio.

MWC picks Zimbabwe city as next assembly site, but decision tentative due to country's unrest

GUATEMALA CITY—The Mennonite World Conference General Council has set Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, as the site for the next MWC assembly, to be held in 2003. But the selection is tentative because of recent political unrest in the country.

The decision was made July 22 during the General Council's meeting in Guatemala City. MWC officials will visit Zimbabwe in October or November to assess the situation. If uncertainty remains, they will look for other sites. The MWC executive committee will make the final decision about the assembly at its annual meeting next year.

With a population of 622,000, Bulawayo is Zimbabwe's second largest city. The country is home to about 25,000 members of the Brethren in Christ, an Anabaptist denomination affiliated with MWC. There are no Mennonites in Zimbabwe other than a small Church of God in Christ, Mennonite (Holdeman), presence.

Following the pattern of the 1997 assembly in Calcutta, India, the 2003 event will include Assembly Gathered and Assembly Scattered. Assembly Gathered will be the main meeting, while Assembly Scattered will include visits to Mennonite and Brethren in Christ communities in Ethiopia and other African countries.

MWC officials had also considered Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, as the site for Assembly Gathered. But the MWC executive committee decided last year to recommend Zimbabwe, based on its facilities and political stability at the time. The 2003 assembly would be the first time for the international gathering to be held in Africa.

In April, representatives of MTS Travel in Ephrata, Pa., did an on-site feasibility study of lodging and travel capacities in Bulawayo. The team called the city "an excellent venue … subject to travel concerns and a few serious but manageable transportation and lodging factors."

The proposed Bulawayo meeting site is the International Exhibition Center, a large, privately owned exhibition grounds not far from the center of the city. It has three large halls with total seating capacity of about 20,000. There is also an outdoor arena, which is slightly larger than a football field. Terraced seating around the arena holds as many as 10,000 people.—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

MWC General Council

The Mennonite World Conference General Council consists of representatives from all member churches, about 90 in 50 countries. The council meets every three years. The Guatemala City meeting was held following the Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation, which met July 12-16. (See the Aug. 8 issue.)

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Mennonite World Conference president-elect Nancy Heisey translates proceedings into French during last month's meeting of the MWC General Council.

EMU professor chosen MWC's first woman president

GUATEMALA CITY—An African man dreamed one night that a sister in the faith would be the next president of Mennonite World Conference (MWC). His dream will come true in 2003.

Nancy Heisey of Harrisonburg, Va., was selected president-elect by the MWC General Council meeting in Guatemala City July 21.

Heisey, associate professor of biblical studies and church history at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, will be the first woman president in MWC's 75-year history. She is also the first president-elect, a position created for training purposes. She will succeed current president Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia at the 2003 assembly, scheduled for Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

Heisey's election surprised some, but not the African dreamer. He spoke of his dream several days before Heisey's election, said MWC executive secretary Larry Miller.

"He wanted to tell us beforehand, because if you wait to tell the dream after the event happens, then people think you made it up," Miller said. "In Africa, dreams are taken very seriously and are seen as signs from God."

Heisey said she hopes to nurture the growing vision for global communion that current leaders are forging. "I see it [the president-elect position] as an opportunity for me to familiarize myself with the broad picture and to learn from Mesach and Bedru [Hussein, MWC vice president]," she said.

Heisey is secretary of MWC's Theological Education for Five Continents program. She worked with Mennonite Central Committee for 18 years in Africa and Akron, Pa., including three years as associate executive secretary. Twelve years ago, she and her husband, Paul Longacre, traveled around the globe to get feedback on mission efforts of North American Mennonite mission agencies.

"I think God has his plans for her," said Antonio Carlos de Fairia of Brazil, "and we can bless her."—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

MWC = Mennonite World Communion?

New global dynamics may bring organizational changes

GUATEMALA CITY—Now in its 75th year, Mennonite World Conference (MWC) is no longer only a meeting every six years but a growing partnership—some call it a "communion"—among more than 1 million Anabaptists around the world.

During MWC General Council meetings July 17-23 in Guatemala City, the organization's leaders took steps to strengthen their churches' growing communion. They asked MWC to consider expanding its projects and funding and possibly changing its name to correspond with members' increased desire for interdependence and partnership.

"We need more than just a conference," said MWC president Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia. "Perhaps it could be a federation or an alliance or a communion.

"The church in the South is no longer the target of mission by the church in the North. They are mature churches. ... They are longing for partnership. So we need a revised paradigm for our relationship."

Council members—representing about 90 Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in 50 countries—responded positively to the goal of broader communion by approving the appointment of an international planning commission to study possible MWC changes.

The commission is expected to begin work in December to determine what member churches expect from MWC's future and what kind of global organization best responds to those expectations. The commission, which includes representatives from each continent, will then develop an implementation plan.

If changes are desired, the commission will recommend a proposal for action by the General Council in 2003.

"MWC has been moving beyond conference for some time, but this is the first time this language [related to the idea of communion] has been tested with council members," said MWC executive secretary Larry Miller.

"It seems to resonate well, the vision of moving toward more communion, while changing the name from Mennonite World Conference to Mennonite World Communion is a little more problematic, because of the different cultural connotations the word 'communion' represents."

Expanded communion, however, will take expanded resources. About a third of MWC's average annual operating budget of about $550,000 comes from fair-share dues of MWC member churches. Fair shares are determined by the World Bank's gross national product (GNP) statistics.

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Enock Shamapani , a Brethren in Christ bishop from Zambia, leads a Bible study during Mennonite World Conference meetings July 17-23 in Guatemala City.

For example, a fair share in 2001 from Burkina Faso—which has 80 members in its national church and a per capita GNP of $240—would total $1. A fair share in 2001 from the emerging Mennonite Church USA would total about $216,000, or $1.50 per member per year, based on the denomination's 127,000 members and U.S. per capita GNP of $29,240.

Many council members said each member church needs to give its resources, whether financial or spiritual, in the attitude that it all belongs to God. "We should be talking tithing, not just digging into our pockets and throwing what's left into the offering," said Peter Stucky of Colombia. "We should be disciplined about this, and it [the fair-share formula] seems like a correct way."

But Alberto Quintela of the United States said: "I'm concerned that we set up some realistic expectations [with fair share] ... because there are some guilt complexes occurring [in North America]. Perhaps we should set a lower target."

MWC leaders said they plan to develop new fund-raising strategies for next year.

In other action, the General Council approved:

- Starting a Global Young Adult Exchanges Program, a cooperative endeavor proposed by MWC and Mennonite Central Committee. Program participants, aged 19 to 30, will study and serve in another country for a year.
- An MWC-Mennonite Resources Network Sabbatical Exchange for Church Leaders—a joint venture with MWC and Franconia Conference (MC). The two groups will annually approve a sabbatical in eastern Pennsylvania for a leader from the South.—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

Peace, Faith and Life councils also meet

In addition to the Mennonite World Conference General Council, the MWC Peace Council and Faith and Life Council also met in Guatemala City last month.

The Peace Council's recommendations included continuing to send delegations to churches suffering war or oppression as an expression of solidarity. A recent delegation went to Colombia.

Other recommendations included strengthening regional peace networks and sending letters of concern regarding situations of conflict that affect member churches.

The Faith and Life Council identified common core convictions among Anabaptists and recommended future tasks.—*Meetinghouse*

Assembly notes Native peoples' differing views on connection between Christianity and culture

Priscilla Wero, a Navajo potter and a leader in the Light of Life Mennonite Church in Bloomfield, N.M., demonstrates her craft at Native Assembly 2000 at Hopi Mission School. The assembly drew about 400 Mennonites from 19 tribes in the United States and Canada.

KYKOTSMOVI, Ariz.—By their own admission, Native American and Canadian Christians are not united in how they view the relationship of Christ and their respective cultures. Nearly 400 Mennonites from at least 19 tribes came together in the high desert of northeastern Arizona to talk about those differences.

Native Assembly 2000 convened July 24-27 at Kykotsmovi, hosted by Hopi and Navajo Mennonites at Hopi Mission School. The event was jointly sponsored by Mennonite Indian Leaders Council (General Conference Mennonite Church), Native Ministries Canada (Mennonite Church Canada) and United Native Ministries (Mennonite Church).

"Many of us are on a spectrum of how we see Christ and our cultures," said plenary speaker Lawrence Hart, a Mennonite minister and a Southern Cheyenne peace chief from Clinton, Okla. "Several years ago, we agreed to disagree, but we keep encountering the differences among us. Hence, this assembly."

Hart, who has been active in both Mennonite and Cheyenne circles, opened the assembly by declaring the compatibility of his Christian and his tribal beliefs. "Each gives strength to the other," he says.

Hart emphasized the need for indigenous people to see Jesus through their own lenses. "We have been seeing Jesus through the lenses of Euro-Western people," he said. "Native people need to see Jesus through our own eyes and lenses, just like Euro-Westerners do."

In his plenary address, Terry LeBlanc, a Canadian of Mi'kmaq and Acadian extraction, repeatedly told his listeners that there is no such thing as a Christian culture.

"God wants to take hold of us and transform us in the context of the culture from which we come," he said, citing the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15. "The believers in Acts 15 buried the issue of culture, but we've been grave-digging ever since.

"We've been hypocritical for hundreds of years, embracing Western culture and materialism wholeheartedly and without criticism while rejecting our own cultures," said LeBlanc, who works with World Vision near Edmonton. "If we keep doing the same things we've been doing for the past 500 years, we'll still be talking about the same issues 500 years from now. And our people will still be in the same place, with few of them knowing Christ."

Plenary speaker Menno Wiebe, a longtime worker among Canada's Native peoples, spoke of the need for openness when considering the confluence of Christ and culture.

GCMC photos by Melanie Zuercher

Michelle Armster from Lancaster, Pa., gives her blessing to 5-month-old Adam Barnhill, who is being held by his mother, Lisa, while his father, Don, receives good wishes from members of a receiving line. The Barnhills, of Walnut Hill, Fla., dedicated their son during Native Assembly 2000, held July 24-27 at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

"God's truth is greater than any culture can ever coin it," said Wiebe, who lives in Winnipeg. "It can be revealed in all cultures of the world. It can't be confined to any one, no matter how progressive they think they are."

He told of a trip he made to the Grand Canyon with some colleagues. "There we were, all standing in a line with our cameras to take a picture," Wiebe said. "It was the same thing, but every picture turned out a little different. It depends on where you stand. You don't judge the other who stands in a different place. And you get the most complete picture if you look at them all."

Each plenary session was followed by opportunity for the audience to respond to the speakers, their message and each other. Not all participants agreed with all the positions presented. Overall, however, assembly participants seemed comfortable with the diversity of culture, practice and opinion represented.

"This gathering shows we're still united as Native people," said Jerry Lonewolf Billiot, a Houma from Gretna, La. "A lot of Christians came from a long way to be here."

Said Priscilla Wero, a Navajo from Bloomfield, N.M.: "I learn more every time I go to one of these meetings. Each time I go, I learn new things about different tribes. I am learning how to sift the good things. That's what I want for my children and grandchildren."

—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service*

Ethiopian college goes from 'school without walls' to bursting at the seams as enrollment skyrockets

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia—Hailu Cherenet would like to share the vibrancy of the flourishing Mennonite church in Ethiopia with North America.

As academic dean of Meserete Kristos College, the only Mennonite Bible school in Ethiopia, Cherenet says he is thankful that the Western church sent "white bread" to his country a long time ago. But now he looks across the ocean and dreams of one day sending missionaries back to North America.

"Maybe some day the brown bread will come to you," he says. "Our hope and vision is to take the fire to those churches to which we owe a lot."

For now, Meserete Kristos College, located in the capital city of Addis Ababa, is the training ground for evangelists who have helped fuel the rapid growth of the Meserete Kristos Church, the Mennonite church in Ethiopia. There are more than 230 congregations and 610 church-planting centers across the country.

During the time of the repressive Marxist government, from 1974 to 1991, the church was forced underground, and leaders were trained in various houses around the country. "During the persecution, we had what we called a Bible school without walls," Cherenet says.

When the government was overthrown in 1991, the Mennonite church once again experienced freedom and corresponding growth. More educated people joined the church, and the need for better-trained, knowledgeable leaders became increasingly important.

So Cherenet helped start the Meserete Kristos College in 1991 in a small rented house with 13 students. "Students were squeezed in one little room," he recalls. "They were eating there. They were sleeping there. At times we even used the dormitory for a classroom."

Donations from North America and Europe have helped the school relocate to larger, though still cramped, quarters. Most of the students are also sponsored from overseas.

Sixty-two students attended the college last year. Come September, more than 130 students are expected—most who are already in full-time ministry—in programs ranging from a one-year certificate to a four-year degree. One program trains church planters for six weeks each year.

Bob and Linda Hovde, Mennonite Central Committee and Eastern Mennonite Missions representatives in Ethiopia, both taught courses at the college last semester. With other work pressures, they didn't have a lot of time to teach, but were glad they did. "It energized us by being there," Linda Hovde says. "It's contagious when you're with people who are filled with joy."

She says that during school breaks, many of the students continue their work as evangelists, walking many hours from village to village, with little financial compensation. "These are such committed, solid people," Hovde says.

Says Cherenet: "The school has substantial impact on shaping the theology of the Mennonite community here and shaping servant leaders. Our hope would be to produce mature, responsible servant leaders which would impact the whole Ethiopian evangelical church and beyond."—*Carol Thiessen of MCC News Service*

GCMC/MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Pointing the way

Janet Plenert helps her daughter, Natasha Plenert (left), and Rachel Hollinger-Janzen follow along during worship at the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions annual Missions Seminar, held July 24-31 at Goshen (Ind.) College. The seminar gathered workers from around the world for worship, fellowship, Bible study and prayer. The seminar also placed special emphasis on nurturing the children of mission workers. The Plenerts last year concluded six years in Brazil with COM and MBM. The Hollinger-Janzens returned to the United States this year after 13 years in Benin with MBM.

Quilt pieces together congregation's life

When Eighth Street Mennonite Church commissioned a well-known local fabric artist to create a new piece of art for the church's foyer, she in turn commissioned the congregation to help.

The result is a community quilt that pieces together more than 100 stories of congregational participants.

The project started late last year after Barbara Peterson was selected to create the piece of art. She asked the congregation to submit strips of cloth to be woven into a quilt. Contributors were also to submit stories about their cloth.

"As I read your explanations of the significance of each fabric—a blind woman's knitting, a grandmother's apron, a child's 'blankee,' a soccer referee's jersey—I felt as if I was invited to share your private lives," Peterson wrote in a handmade book accompanying the quilt.

The quilt was presented to the congregation and dedicated earlier this summer.—*Ron Byler*

Family considerations push couple into MVS

TOPEKA, Kan.—Family is the reason Jen and Jerry Yoder went into voluntary service.

They are parents of Jevin, 5, and Jayce, 3, and serve with Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS). Jen and Jerry fill a 1½-time position as site managers for Cornerstone, a church-supported agency that provides services for low-income and homeless families.

But three years ago, Jerry was a city planner for Hutchinson, a small city of 40,000 in south central Kansas. "I really liked what I was doing, but I was also seeing the kind of relationship many of my co-workers had with their kids as a result of their job schedules," he says. "I felt like they were growing up so fast, and I wasn't seeing much of them. I wanted to spend more time with the boys."

> I really liked what I was doing, but I was also seeing the kind of relationship many of my co-workers had with their kids as a result of their job schedules.
>
> *—Jerry Yoder*

The Yoders began the application process to MVS a year and a half before actually going to the assignment in Topeka last August. "It took longer than usual because we wanted to stay in Kansas to be closer to my family, and we wanted an assignment that would enable us to take care of the kids without using daycare," says Jen, a native of Whitewater, in the south central part of the state.

The Topeka assignment filled both criteria. Jerry does maintenance for Cornerstone. Jen, who has a master's degree in social work, has worked on a variety of projects, including writing an educational handbook; sending notices about classes in landlord-tenant relationships, budgeting, nutrition and parenting; and doing childcare during some of those classes.

Their jobs allow them to each have one of the boys with them at all times. "Jayce can handle a screwdriver and take things apart, and that keeps him busy," says Jerry. "Jevin can help me by handing me tools or holding things."

The community aspect of their assignment is important to the Yoders. "One thing we wanted to teach our kids is what community is like and to get used to transitions—the coming and going, saying goodbye," Jerry says. "It's been good for them to meet all kinds of people and start learning already about some of the things people go through."

The Yoders' term concludes in August 2001, but they are considering extending their time in Topeka. Says Jen, "I remember saying recently, 'This is the happiest I've been in a long time.' "—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM News Services*

Correction: Willi Hugo Perez was a Guatemalan representative to the Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation last month. He was misidentified in a story in the Aug. 8 issue.

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Economists add voice to debt-relief campaign

WINNIPEG—Mennonite Economists, a group of U.S. and Canadian academics and practitioners, has thrown its support behind Jubilee 2000, a global campaign to cancel the international debt of the world's poorest countries.

"The Jubilee 2000 initiative is a direct challenge to our leaders," the group says in a statement. "It is important for us to impress on our leaders that the motivation for action should be the well-being of the poor people of the world."

For many countries, payments on international debt redirects money that could otherwise be spent on health, education and other social services and infrastructure. For example, Mennonite Economists cite sub-Saharan African countries, which pay $13 billion on their international debts annually. Yet $9 billion invested in health, nutrition and sanitation would save the lives of 21 million children.

"Without the bondage of debt hanging over them, these children would have some hope for a new lease on life," Mennonite Economists says.—*The Marketplace*

Three MBM videos honored in competitions

ELKHART, Ind.—Three videos by Mennonite Media have won awards in both national and international competitions.

Beyond the News: Facing Death received third place in the U.S. International Film and Video Festival, which judged 1,600 entries from 30 countries. The video is a documentary about three families' experiences with serious illness or death.

The U.S. International Film and Video Festival recognizes business, television, industrial, documentary and informational film and video productions.

Many Grains, a video introduction to the Mennonite Church, and *Rhythms of Peace 2,* a children's video on nonviolence, received bronze statuettes as finalists in the Telly Awards, which recognized non-network and cable commercials, films and video productions.—*MBM News Service*

Mennonite Foundation appoints executive

GOSHEN, Ind.—Jeffrey C. Swartzentruber has been appointed executive director of Mennonite Foundation, a part of Mennonite Mutual Aid and based in Goshen. Swartzentruber previously was corporate treasurer at Goshen Rubber Companies. He served as MMA's controller from 1989 to 1993.

Swartzentruber holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from Goshen (Ind.) College and is a certified public accountant.

Mennonite Foundation helps individuals with charitable giving and estate-planning consultation. It also manages $371 million in investments for individuals and church institutions.—*MMA News Service*

New MCC communications director named

AKRON, Pa.—Mark Beach has been named the new director of communications for Mennonite Central Committee. He has 15 years of experience with MCC, including video production, photography and service assignments. He has a master's degree in international journalism from Baylor University in Waco, Texas.—*MCC News Service*

Hesston College sets fund-raising record

HESSTON, Kan.—Helped by a $114,000 increase in giving by alumni, contributions to Hesston College's Annual Fund reached $1.27 million for the 1999-2000 fiscal year. It was the third consecutive year giving to the Annual Fund topped $1 million.

by the way ...

Seventeen languages are spoken among the Mennonites of Latin America.—*An Introduction to Mennonite History* by C.J. Dyck

MCC

School and health examinations

Children in the southern Mozambican town of Moamba inspect their new school-health kits from Mennonite Central Committee. More than 200 students in Moamba recently received kits, which contain notebooks, pencils, crayons, a ruler, a washcloth, a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, a nail file and bandages. Most of the students could not afford such supplies, which have been made scarce by flooding this year.

Workers

Baer, Karen, Harrisonburg, Va., is beginning a three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Haiti as an environmental concerns promoter.

Bean, Arnie, Crestline, Calif., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Ontario, Calif., in community development.

Bontrager, Sandra, Elkhart, Ind., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in Elkhart as a community development worker.

Esbenshade, Jennifer and Wade, New Holland, Pa., are beginning three-year MCC assignments in Guatemala; Jennifer will work with community development in education and Wade with community development in agriculture.

Graber, Katie and Jon Nofziger, Goshen, Ind., are beginning two-year MCC assignments in China as teachers for China Educational Exchange (CEE).

Kratz, Mary and Ray, Mount Joy, Pa., are beginning two-year MCC assignments in China as teachers for CEE.

Landes, Christopher and Dawn, Lebanon, Pa., are beginning three-year MCC assignments in Cambodia; Christopher as a peace program worker and Dawn as an educator.

Schildt, Charlene and Ken, Marietta, Pa., are beginning one-year MCC assignments in China as teachers.

Wentland, Kate, Claremont, Calif., is beginning a two-year MCC assignment in China as a teacher for CEE.

Births

Cook, Makenna ReaAnn, July 19, to James and Melanie (Huebert) Cook, Wichita, Kan.

Cooper, Joshua David, July 24, to David and Sheila (Ebersole) Cooper, Akron, Pa.

Donovan, Nicholas Adrian, July 17, to Jill and Richard Donovan, Carrsville, Va.

Fitzgerald, Ruth Dawna, July 10, to Emily (Hobgood) and Henry Fitzgerald, Tyro, Va.

Gerber, Anna Janelle, July 11, to Bruce and Grace (Hershberger) Gerber, Worthington, Ohio.

Miller, Jansen Mark, July 27, to Brian and Heather (Loewer) Miller, Lancaster, Pa.

Schrag, Matthew, May 16, to Lori and Steve Schrag, Nickerson, Kan.

Smith, Meriwether Savale, June 6, to Linnaea (Schroeer) and Tim Smith, Bastrop, Texas.

Steckly, David Norman, July 22, to Karen and Randy Steckly, Millbank, Ont.

Steinert, Silas John Cassell and Simon Roy Oliver (twins), July 19 to Scott and Stephanie Steinert, Hesston, Kan.

Tarbuck, Lauren Alyssa, June 14, to Leigh and Millie (Metzler) Tarbuck, Rochester, N.H.

Ulrich, Olivia Joy, June 3, to Lonnie and Randy Ulrich, Roanoke, Ill.

Zhang, Andy, July 22, to Helen and Shawn Zhang, Harleysville, Pa.

Correction: In the June 27 births, Douglas Abraham Nisly-Nagle should have been listed as Douglas Abraham Nisly-Nagele.

Marriages

Belgiano/Rhode: Cara Belgiano, Brunswick, N.Y., and Brian Rhode, Kutztown, Pa., July 15 at Brunswick Presbyterian Church.

Fry/Reimer: Donna Froese Fry, Inman, Kan., and John Reimer, Inman, July 23 at Inman Mennonite Church.

Gamler/Miller: Teri Gamler, Sassamansville, Pa., and Rusty Miller, Boyertown, Pa., July 15 at Bally (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hochstetler/Lukacsko: Jennifer Hochstetler, Millersburg, Ohio, and Brian Lukacsko, Parma, Ohio, July 8 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Klink/Miller: Nathan Klink, Holmesville, Ohio, and Julia Ann Miller, Millersburg, Ohio, July 29 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Lind/Steiner: Maria Lind, Portland, Ore., and Tim Steiner, Orrville, Ohio, July 22 at Smithville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Martin/Penner: Marlene Martin, Elkhart, Ind., and Kevin Penner, Goshen, Ind., April 29 at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis, Mich.

Miller/Wengerd: Reuben Miller, Sugarcreek, Ohio, and Mary Wengerd, Trail, Ohio, July 22 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Correction: In the July 4 marriages, Kristina Birky and Michael McMannis should have been listed as Kristina Ramirez and Michael McMannis.

Deaths

Bachman, Beulah Wagner, 94, Roanoke, Ill., died July 12. Spouse: Rudie Bachman (deceased). Parents: David and Emma Steider Wagner (deceased). Survivors: children Richard, Hezzie, Loren, Carol Ehling; nine grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild. Funeral: July 15 at Roanoke Mennonite Church.

Bauer, John, 89, Hesston, Kan., died July 4. Spouse: Mildred Bauer. Parents: John and Susie Bauer (deceased). Other survivors: children Jim, Judy Boschmann; three grandchildren. Funeral: July 7 at Hanston (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Buller, Irvin, 74, Halstead, Kan., died June 3 of cancer. Spouse: Ruby Duncan Buller. Parents: Daniel and Elizabeth Buller (deceased). Other survivors: children Melonie, Diana; four grandchildren. Funeral: June 13 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead.

Buller, Jacob, 78, Henderson, Neb., died July 26. Spouse: Sophia Buller. Parents: Henry and Maria Janzen Buller (deceased). Other survivors: children Marvin, Darlene Powell, Wanda Johnson, Dianne, Ardell, Kristi Jensen, Paul; 13 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 29 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Davidhizar, Warren, 60, Hollsopple, Pa., died July 20 of a heart attack. Spouse: Joyce Hershberger Davidhizar. Parents: Joseph Davidhizar (deceased) and Kathryn Blough Davidhizar Schneider. Other survivors: children Douglas, Carla William. Funeral: July 23 at Thomas Mennonite Church, Hollsopple.

Ferg, Eleanor Ann, 62, Johnstown, Pa., died July 26. Parents: Robert (deceased) and Helen Beckley Ferg. Funeral: July 29 at Johnstown.

Freed, Pearl Nice, 65, Quakertown, Pa., died May 1. Spouse: Harold Freed. Other survivors: children Robert, Phillip, Darryl, Karen, Donna; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: May 5 at Salem Mennonite Church, Quakertown.

Greaser, Frank, 77, Souderton, Pa., died July 24 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Ruth Moyer Greaser. Parents: Frank and Hester Cassel Greaser (deceased). Other survivors: children Frank, Cheryl Heacock, Kathleen; two grandchildren. Funeral: July 27 at Souderton.

Gutierrez, Maria Alvarado, 70, Davenport, Iowa, died July 6. Spouse: Pablo Gutierrez Sr. Parents: Sylvester and Maria Hernandez Alvarado (deceased). Other survivors: children Esperanza, Celia Spicer, Gabriel, Elvia, Maria, Samuel, Martha, Pablo Jr., Saul; 19 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: July 9 at Davenport; July 10 at Templo de Alabanza Spanish Mennonite Church, Moline, Ill.

Herrfort, Lavina Yutzi, 88, Milverton, Ont., died June 23. Spouse: Chris Herrfort (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Fannie Spenler Yutzi (deceased). Survivors: children Stan, Ralph; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 25 at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, Ont.

Hostetler, Vincent, 79, Louisville, Ohio, died July 23. Spouse: Arlene Hostetler. Parents: Aaron and Katie Schmucker Hostetler (deceased). Other survivors: children Jean Burdett, Diane Duff, Denise Miller, Delmar; 11 grandchildren; two step-grandchildren. Funeral: July 26 at Beech Mennonite Church, Louisville.

Krehbiel, Walter, Inman, Kan., died May 25. Spouse: Dorothy Krehbiel. Other survivors: children Kenton, Kevin, Beth Hanschu. Funeral: May 28 at Inman Mennonite Church.

Roth, Chester, 93, Normal, Ill., died July 9 of a stroke. Spouse: Beulah Schertz Roth. Parents: Daniel and Barbara Roth (deceased). Other survivors: children Judy Wheeler, Cinda, Debora. Memorial to be held at a later date at Mennonite Church of Normal.

Shank, Mae Vance, 76, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 23. Spouse: Floyd Shank (deceased). Parents: Adam and Anna Vance (deceased). Survivors: children Arneda Gaines, Jeanette Key, Sharon Menefee, Leon, Steven; five grandchildren. Graveside service: July 27 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Shenk, Pauline Mast, 89, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 3. Spouse: Ezra Shenk. Other survivors: children Eleanor Lynch, Ruth, Nora, Gladys Wyse, Carl; six grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 8 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Springer, Elmer, 94, Glendale, Ariz., died July 19. Spouse: Clara Springer. Parents: Valentine and Emilia Springer (deceased). Other survivors: children Ted, Fred; five grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 23 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Toews, Anna, Inman, Kan., died May 26. Survivors: children Doris Krehbiel, Norma Jean Swarz, Carolyn Berry; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: May 29 at Inman Mennonite Church.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event.

classifieds

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks full-time ***Spanish teacher*** and full-time ***social studies teacher*** to begin as soon as possible. Contact Marlene Brubaker, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, a small, dedicated congregation located next to the University of Florida in Gainesville, is seeking a full-time ***pastor*** and/or an interim pastor. North central Florida offers a vibrant cultural life and a wide range of outdoor activities.

  Contact Fred Brenneman, Search Committee Chair, 352-372-6721; or email <brenhms@aol.com>.

- **Hinkletown Mennonite School** welcomes applicants for ***K-8 music teacher*** (teacher certification preferred). Come teach in warm supportive school community! Find out more about HMS at <http://home.ptd.net/~hmsstaff>.

  Send resumes to: Tom Burnett, 272 Wanner Rd., Ephrata, PA 17522; 717-354-6705; email inquiries <tburnett@ptd.net> also encouraged.

- **Slate Hill Mennonite Church**, Camp Hill, Pa., seeks a full-time ***lead pastor***. The gift of effective preaching is essential. Experience and seminary training are desirable. Must be committed to Anabaptist understandings of faith. Slate Hill is a medium-sized, suburban, well-established Lancaster Conference congregation close to Harrisburg.

  Inquiries/resumes to Rosalie Roland, 337 West Meadow Drive, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055; email <wlroland@aol.com>; 717-697-8650; fax 717-697-5889.

- **25th anniversary celebration** of the ***St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship***, Sunday, Nov. 12; gathering at 9 a.m., worship at 10, meal at noon. All are invited to come celebrate 25 years of growth and ministry in St. Louis.

  For lodging or information, contact Sheila Yoder-Baer, 636-584-0231; email <yoderbaer@juno.com>.

- **Sharing Programs, Inc.**, Lancaster, Pa., a property/casualty mutual aid program, seeks ***sales and marketing manager*** to lead sales, marketing and member services functions. Requires strong managerial skills, experience in sales, marketing and long-range planning. Experience in property/casualty insurance industry desired.

  Send resume to: Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367; email <hr@splmc.com>. Visit <www.sharingprograms.com>.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is seeking ***Mennonite Foundation representatives*** to develop and enhance relationships with people in Ohio and eastern Pennsylvania. The Foundation provides planned giving support to established donor constituency and charitable institutions. People with financial planning, accounting, sales or legal training are encouraged to apply. Limited overnight travel required. MMA offers a competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Please submit letter of interest and resume to: MMA, Human Resources Dept., P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264; <www.mma-online.org>.

- **Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference** is seeking a ***conference regional minister*** to serve churches in Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee, except for congregations in Elkhart and eastern St. Joseph counties of Indiana. This minister will provide leadership and ministry with overseers, pastors and congregations to develop excellence in spiritual leadership; coordinate the development of resources to help strengthen congregations committed to the mission and ministry of Jesus. They will serve up to 35 congregations and their pastors and be a member of the staff ministry team of IN-MI Mennonite Conference. Applicants will possess a vibrant Christian faith in a Mennonite perspective, will be available at least by January 2001, and will have some professional training and at least six years pastoral experience. We encourage women, men and people from under-represented groups to apply.

  Interested people may submit a current Ministerial Leadership Information form with references to Indiana-Michigan Conference Search Committee, c/o Jerry Albrecht, 1427 McCormick Dr., Nappanee, IN 46550, by Sept. 6, 2000. For more information call or email Jerry Albrecht at 219-773-7633 or <albrecht@bnin.net>.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has two openings for single people for ***one-year voluntary service assignments*** (begin dates Sept. 1 and November).

  For more information, contact International Guest House, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Call for papers:** An interdisciplinary, international study conference on ***"The Amish, Old Orders and the Media,"*** sponsored by the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies, will be held June 14-16, 2001, at Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pa. The conference will explore professional, ethical and academic issues in depicting and reporting about plain-dress Anabaptist and Pietist groups. Proposals for papers or for thematic sessions from media professionals and academic researchers are encouraged. Deadline is Oct. 20, 2000.

  For more information, contact Prof. David Eller, the Young Center, One Alpha Drive, Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, PA 17022; 727-361-1470; email <youngctr@etown.edu>.

- **Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship**, a worshiping congregation of approximately 170 in Goshen, Ind., seeks an ***additional pastor*** to serve on their leadership team. This person will have primary responsibility for the preaching and teaching ministry as well as vision and mission planning.

  Written inquiries, resumes and Ministerial Leadership Information forms should be sent to Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, c/o Search Committee, 2509 Berkey Ave., Goshen, IN 46526. Contacts should be made on or before Sept. 10, 2000.

IT/computer professionals

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) is a church-affiliated insurance and financial services company. We currently have a need for IT/computer professionals. We offer a competitive salary, excellent fringe benefits, and a creative, non-smoking environment.

Project Manager

MMA is seeking a project manager to lead system development projects and develop information systems. Requires a bachelor's degree, leadership/planning/organizational skills, three to five years experience in systems development, plus experience in project leadership.

Software Developer

MMA is seeking a software developer to analyze, design, develop and/or purchase business software for our AS/400 and PC-LAN environment. The right person for this job will have or will be completing a bachelor's degree in an area such as management information systems, business, finance, accounting, computer science, mathematics, etc. This person will also possess strong skills in such areas as working with people, communications, planning, organizing and leadership potential. Two to five years of related experience is preferred. All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply.

Send or fax resume to:

MMA
Human Resources Dept.
Post Office Box 483
Goshen, IN 46527
Fax: 219 537-6640
SteveRK@mma-online.org

M M A

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Goshen City Church of the Brethren**, Goshen, Ind., seeks full-time ***additional staff*** to assist in areas of community outreach, young adult and youth ministries, contemporary worship and Christian education. Bachelor degree minimum.

  Contact Northern Indiana District Office, 219-773-3149.

- **Opportunities for service!** Eastern Mennonite Missions has current ***medical opportunities*** as follows: an experienced doctor for Nepal, a doctor for Albania and a nurse and/or doctor for Guatemala.

  If you have interest in exploring any of these or other current opportunities for youth to adult, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** is seeking a teaching applicant for ***middle school language arts/coordinator*** to begin in mid-autumn. Interested people should contact Kay Predmore, 1050 E. Newport Road, Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-9551.

- **Friendship Community**, Lititz, Pa., is actively seeking applicants for the ***program supervisor*** position. If you are interested in assisting adults with mental disabilities, call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466 ext. 102; email <amy.horst@friendship-comm.org>. Christian mission. EOE

- **Spruce Lake Retreat** (Pocono Mtns. of northeastern Pa.) seeks ***business manager***—ministry-minded person with business/financial training and experience to manage accounting, retail and front office functions. This multifaceted camp ministry serves over 20,000 guests annually. Responsibilities include staff management, financial reporting, annual audit preparation, insurance oversight and computer systems administration. Salary and benefits package. On-camp housing available. Position open immediately.

  Send resume to Executive Director, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 800-822-7505; email <retreat@enter.net>; fax 570-595-0328.

- **Western Mennonite School**, as part of an expanding and growing program, is seeking qualified faculty and staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered educational setting. Western (grades 6-12) is located in the beautiful Willamette Valley in the Northwest.

  Facilities manager: Full-time position; management and supervisory experience necessary to lead a team that maintains and cares for facilities, plant and grounds. The campus includes 7 buildings and is located on 40 acres just outside of Salem, Ore.

  Spanish instructor: Level I, II and III; may also include ESL instruction.

  Head girls resident director: Full-time 10-month salaried position; focus on team-oriented youth ministry. Responsibilities include counseling, coordinating dorm activities and oversight of assistant resident director.

  Tutors: Full- or part-time positions. Opportunity to mentor students and provide one-on-one guidance for students who need academic assistance. Instructional or tutoring experience preferred.

  For more information, contact Principal Eric Martin, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000 or <Martines@teleport.com>.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** invites applications for:

  Country director for Bangladesh: Starting date Jan. 5, 2001. Key qualifications: proven ability to lead large, diverse agency or company; ability to build team spirit among some 20 expatriates and 200 national staff; ability to network with government, church and community leaders. Previous overseas management experience highly desired.

  Associate director for Bangladesh: Starting date Jan. 5, 2001. Key qualifications: ability and strong interest in helping MCC volunteers adapt to life and work in Bangladesh; ability to build team spirit among some 20 volunteers and 200 national staff. Previous overseas management experience preferred.

  Staff development director for Bangladesh: Starting date: immediately. Key qualifications: ability to design and set in place staff development program, including policies, procedures and structure, for some 200 national staff working with MCC in Bangladesh; ability to institute a system for staff performance appraisals and to establish salaries and benefits.

  All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship, active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

  Direct inquiries to Becky Stahly or Charmayne Brubaker, MCC Human Resources Department, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-1151; fax 717-859-2171; email <rss@mcc.org> or <cdb@mcc.org>.

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urces resources resources resources

by Gordon Houser

A list of books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Building the City of God by Susanne Coalson Donoghue (Mennonite Women, 2000, $4), the second part of Mennonite Women's "One Body, One Spirit" Bible study series, examines the book of Nehemiah through the lens of Jesus, reflecting on what went wrong in the Israelites' rebuilding process. Order from P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114.

Worship—A Closer Look by John D. Witvliet (CRC Publications, 2000, $12.95 for a set of 10) is a four-week retreat that combines sermon outlines, small group study and personal devotions for home use to help people grow spiritually all week long.

The Hammer Rings Hope: Photos and Stories From Fifty Years of Mennonite Disaster Service by Lowell Detweiler (Herald Press, 2000, $19.99) tells the dramatic story of MDS, from its start in 1950 in Kansas to its work throughout North America.

Into the Depths of God by Calvin Miller (Bethany House, 2000, $16.99) shows how to break through the tyranny of the things that bind our hearts in order to discover the freedom of worshiping a God who comes near.

Meditations for Weary Parents by Sandra Drescher-Lehman (Good Books, 2000, $7.95) presents short, daily meditations that offer a spot of peace, a redefining angle on the disturbance at hand, a pause to steady the rumpus.

Call for a Shared Jerusalem is a project endorsed by Mennonite Central Committee and other members of the Churches for Middle East Peace coalition. A free resource packet that includes worship resources, Sunday school materials and stories by MCC worker Sonia Epp Weaver is available from Churches for Middle East Peace, 110 Maryland Ave. NE, Suite 108, Washington, DC 20008.

A Covenant to Keep: Meditations on the Biblical Theme of Justice by James W. Skillen (CRC Publications, 2000, $12.50) challenges Christians to get involved in social justice.

Anabaptists & Postmodernity, edited by Susan Biesecker-Mast and Gerald Biesecker-Mast (Pandora Press U.S., 2000, $26.95), contains perspectives on postmodernity in the context of the Anabaptist peace church tradition, as presented at a conference in 1998 at Bluffton (Ohio) College. The book includes contributions from 20 scholars from a variety of disciplines. It is the first volume in Bluffton's C. Henry Smith Series.

Violence Renounced: René Girard, Biblical Studies and Peacemaking, edited by Willard Swartley (Pandora Press U.S., 2000, $23.95), includes 14 essays by various scholars reflecting on Girard's theories on imitation, rivalry, violence, sacrifice and religion.

Good News! A Celebration of the Gospel (Mennonite Media, 2000, $12.95 for CD, $7.95 for cassette) is a recording of a cappella hymns sung by men's quartets for the *Mennonite Hour* radio program, which went off the air in 1979. To order *Good News!* call Mennonite Media at 800-999-3534.

From Danzig to Russia by Peter Hildebrand, translated by Walter Toews with Adolf Ens (CMBC Publications, 2000, $10), is an account of the first emigration of Mennonites from the Danzig area to New Russia in 1789, written in 1836. This is an edited version of Toews' 1994 translation. To order call 204-888-6781.

Teaching to Transform, edited by Goshen College professor Keith Graber Miller (Pinchpenny Press, 2000, $8), is available from Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526.

Recommended reading

Illuminated Life: Monastic Wisdom for Seekers of Light **by Joan Chittister (Orbis Books, 2000, $15) is one more excellent book by the prolific Benedictine nun. Don't be put off by the New Age-ish title or the word "monastic." For those interested in living a life more aware of God's presence, this book is practical and inspiring. In short pieces on alphabetized topics (Awareness, Beauty, Community, . . .), Chittister uses pithy sentences to pass on ancient monastic wisdom. "Real spirituality," she writes, "is contemplation at the eye of chaos."—*gh***

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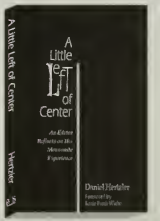

A Little Left of Center

An Editor Reflects on His Mennonite Experience

Daniel Hertzler

"What a fascinating glimpse into the life and times of a respected editor!" says *Steve Shenk*. "I probably averaged two chuckles a page." And *Katie Funk Wiebe* notes that "Wryly Hertzler admits 'editorials . . . are eminently forgettable' yet hopes his editorials may have moved readers along. This book will also move readers along in understanding Mennonite journalism."

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Gordon Houser

Present tense

Just to be is holy.—Abraham Heschel

We are doers, producers, consumers. We measure our worth by what we accomplish. We set goals and push ourselves to meet them, even when doing so hurts us. We need to learn to slow down and live in the present.

We live in a society of relentless, frenetic activity. Information, entertainment and other demands bombard us constantly. The pace of life has increased dramatically in the past few decades. Remember when TV commercials used to last a minute? Now images whirl by in 15-second spots, forcing our brains to keep up.

This fast-paced environment takes a toll. Our attention spans have withered. We've grown "obsessed with speed and convenience," Shelley Cataldo writes (page 6). We have all these devices for saving us time, yet we never seem to have time for anything. We rush from one thing to another: chauffeur our children to soccer practice or music lessons, grab a bite to eat before heading off to a committee meeting or to buy another knickknack for our bulging houses.

God calls us to live with the awareness of God's presence in our every moment, in every breath we take.

In order to move out of the rat race, the hectic, mindless activity that seems to get us nowhere, we will need to help one another change. The pressures around us are strong. Time becomes an oppressive weight we can never seem to escape. No matter how much time we save, we always seem to be facing one more thing to do.

Richard Rohr has said that we cannot give people time until we are willing to "waste" time. That hits me hard. I want to use every available minute to get one more thing done. Yet that makes it difficult to be present with people, to really listen to them. And it leaves me feeling tense. I need to learn to relax in the moment.

Living in the present is the spiritual discipline I find hardest to practice, yet it is the one I most need to practice. When I'm able to focus only on the present—not think about what I need to get done later or regret what I did or didn't do earlier—I can feel the difference in my body. My muscles relax, my lungs seem to expand and I am at peace.

Living this way goes against the grain of our society. It also goes against our church's culture. Mennonites are often more stringent than others about getting things done. In her book *Illuminated Life* (see review, page 19), Joan Chittister writes: "Giving up Spartan routines to visit old relatives or play with children, to write personal mail or take the dog for a walk, to go fishing or have a picnic supper on the shore makes the hardy and virtuous cringe at the very thought of it." She adds, "We are too 'busy' to be human."

Can we trust God enough to keep the world running without our constant attempts to fix it?

To live in the present moment is to recognize our limitations, to understand that we cannot change the past or the future. We only live in the now. But if we are always either looking forward to tomorrow's agenda or pining for the "good old days," we are not really living in the now. We exist, but we do not live the abundant life Jesus offers us (John 10:10).

Evidence is growing that when the mind is still and focused only on the present moment, the body has a tremendous ability to repair itself, to bring healing. A doctor I know says our greatest addiction is to thinking. When we live in our heads, our thoughts roaming through our ubiquitous date books to our various appointments, our bodies suffer.

Our life as families and as communites of believers also suffers. God calls us to wholeness, to live with the awareness of God's presence in our every moment, in every breath we take. That doesn't just happen when we're alone praying. It can happen in whatever situation we find ourselves, whether that's talking with someone, eating a meal, driving a car. No matter where we are, we can live in the present tense. Being in that moment can be holy.

Chittister writes: "Life is not an exercise to be endured. It is a mystery to be unfolded." But if we are running from one thing to another, always focused on where we want to get to next, we will miss that mystery.—*gh*

the Mennonite

August 22, 2000

Prayer and fasting for peace in Mexico

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Paying the penalty

The July 25 issue had a story about José Villafuerte, a Honduran who was executed in Arizona in 1998 ("José's Story"). I would like to tell of an earlier chapter in Villafuerte's life, before he moved to the United States.

One day when I visited Villafuerte on death row, he told me that when he lived in Honduras he had been part of a "police force" and that as an officer he had killed several people. He then spoke of his conversion to Christianity and how his faith had transformed him.

Two days after Villafuerte was executed, a Reuters News Service article named him as a member of Battalion 316, a notorious Honduran death squad. Nobody knows exactly how many people were kidnapped, tortured and killed by the battalion, but they are credited with at least 184 deaths and disappearances. The idea to form Battalion 316 came from the United States, along with funding, training and equipment. The commander was trained at the U.S. Army School of the Americas. Many more members were trained at military bases within the United States. The CIA trained members in intelligence work and physiological interrogation techniques. The CIA also provided funding to hire Argentinean counterinsurgency experts to teach torture techniques. (The Argentines had gained notoriety during their war in the 1970s.) Victims of the battalion included students who demonstrated against the government, union leaders, journalists who were critical of the military, college professors who demanded fair tuition for the poor, and others who called for change.

Villafuerte had been trained by the United States to be a killer for Battalion 316. As long as he killed the political enemies of the United States, citizens of our country funded his generous salary ($375 a month). But when he was convicted of murdering Amillia Scoville, citizens of our country denounced the inhumane act, and Villafuerte was put to death.—*Ben Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

The July 25 issue published three articles concerning the death penality. Each one made a valid contribution, and each one contained an observable flaw or two.

1. None of the authors used the word "innocence." Innocence is at the core of the gospel and the center of Christian faith. It is a primary biblical subject, referred to in several ways, including a return to a state of innocence via cleansing of sin. See 1 John 1:9 and Leviticus 16. The possibility of executing an innocent individual is one of the primary reasons to ban the death penalty.

2. The Old Testament authorizes the death penalty, but with certain ironclad restrictions that modern death penalty advocates willfully omit, such as the mandatory two or three eyewitnesses and the prompt execution of false witnesses. See Deuteronomy 19. Modern death penalty advocates turn a blind eye to Old Testament requirements of the death penalty for many specific sins, including adultery, prostitution, witchcraft, parent curses, desecration of holy days and more.

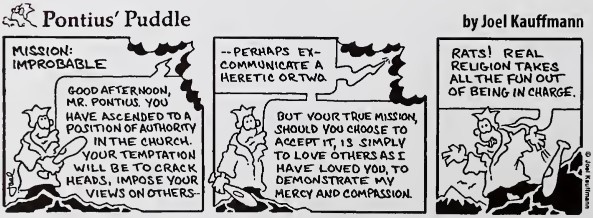
3. Whether Christ actually said Luke 23:24 is debatable. It does not occur in the oldest papyrus manuscript of Luke and in other early manuscripts.

4. As a whole, criminal law in this country is vindictive, based on vengeance, retaliation and premeditated aggression.

Early Anabaptists had a perfect understanding about all such matters, believing there is but one ethical standard for the state as well as the individual. To believe otherwise is to maintain a double standard.—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

False sense of security

Mitchell Brown is misguided at best and deceived at worst when he says: "Jesus doesn't save individuals; he saves communities. Jesus came to bring the kingdom of God, which is above all a community" ("Judge Faith Face-to-Face," July 18). The New Testament teaches that the only way to enter the kingdom of God in this world is through a personal experience with Christ in the new birth (John 3:3; 1 Peter 1:3,22,23; Titus 3:4; 2 Corinthians 5:17). The Christian community is made up of born-again, obedient disciples of the Lord Jesus. While it is true that we live out our faith in a nurturing and correcting community, to teach that salvation is primarily communal promotes a false sense of security. Just because a person chooses to live in a garage doesn't make him a car.


Pontius' Puddle
by Joel Kauffmann
MISSION: IMPROBABLE
GOOD AFTERNOON, MR. PONTIUS. YOU HAVE ASCENDED TO A POSITION OF AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH. YOUR TEMPTATION WILL BE TO CRACK HEADS, IMPOSE YOUR VIEWS ON OTHERS--
--PERHAPS EXCOMMUNICATE A HERETIC OR TWO.
BUT YOUR TRUE MISSION, SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO ACCEPT IT, IS SIMPLY TO LOVE OTHERS AS I HAVE LOVED YOU, TO DEMONSTRATE MY MERCY AND COMPASSION.
RATS! REAL RELIGION TAKES ALL THE FUN OUT OF BEING IN CHARGE.
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theMennonite

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Cover photo
by Christian Peacemaker
Teams

readers say

In his 1556 treatise on the new birth, Menno Simons wrote: "True repentance and the birth from above must take place; we must believe Christ and his word, and we must abide by his spirit, ordinance and example willingly, or eternal misery must be our portion. This is incontrovertible."—*Lindsey Robinson, Harrisburg, Pa.*

Colombian concerns

I wanted to comment on the June 6 issue on Colombia. I just came back from a three-week missionary trip to Colombia sponsored by my congregation, Templo Alabanza Spanish Mennonite Church in Moline, Ill. Many thought I was crazy to go to such a violent country, especially since I traveled there alone. There was no other brave soul to go with me, but I knew the Lord was sending me. The night I arrived in Florencia, a bomb went off just three or four blocks away from the church. Nevertheless, I have fallen in love with Colombia.

I began to pray for this trip a year and a half ago. I celebrated my second anniversary in the Lord while I was in Colombia. I had only been a Christian for four months when a Colombian evangelist told me that I would be going to Colombia. I thought they said that to everyone.

I have had a burden for Colombia for more than a year, and now that I have been there, it is so much stronger. I feel that the Colombian people are a part of me and I am now a part of them. I don't know where this passion for them is leading. I would like to return as often as I can and am praying for continued direction. I have been talking to others about Colombia's need and am willing to help any way I can. I give God all the praise and glory for his protection over me while I was in Colombia and the ministry that he has begun.—*Juanita Arellanos, Moline, Ill.*

Tent for Lent:
return to the path of God

Prayer and fasting at X'oyep, Mexico

by Pierre Shantz

Great friends: Pierre Shantz (left) prays with "Las Abejas" in Mexico.

When I came here, I came with my backpack and my faith in God and listened to the people. They have accepted me openly and I have made great friends here.

I couldn't believe what I'd just heard. Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) and a Mayan Christian pacifist group had set up a tent on the military base in X'oyep, Mexico, and hadn't been expelled from the country. "This is a miracle," I said to my church the Sunday morning before I left to join the team in the state of Chiapas.

Mexico has usually expelled foreigners who are perceived to be interfering in the politics of the country. Since 1994, more than 400 internationals have been kicked out.

Before arriving in X'oyep, I knew that the tent was on the base, but I thought maybe it was somewhere off to the side. No, it sat right in front of the entrance to the soldier barracks, beside the flagpole where the Mexican flag is raised. At the base of the flagpole sat two large banners that read in the Mayan language Tzoztil and in Spanish the theme of our witness: "Lent: Return to the Path of God." I broke out laughing as I came onto the base and saw the tent. I thought, This is a miracle that we are still here.

In addition to fasting, those of us gathered at the tent held a short prayer service every four hours, kneeling around an ever-burning candle representing God's light. The catechists led us through a Catholic litany of prayers, and we spoke aloud our individual prayers. To the soldiers listening from their guard posts, the prayer circle might have sounded like a hen house as people shared prayers in English, Spanish and Tzoztil. But from inside the circle I heard people praying for a return to their communities, a return to justice, forgiveness, peace and the transformation of soldiers' hearts to lead them to leave the military and leave the area.

During the time we spent on the base, we had some interesting discussions. Every so often, Major Mejia, the base commander, came out and talked with us. "The people don't trust us," he said. "They don't come here and use the services we provide."

I said to him: "When I came here, I came with my backpack and my faith in God and listened to the people. They have accepted me openly and I have made great friends here. But you have come with big guns. … and [for] people who are not used to seeing or being around guns, it makes them uncomfortable."

On the Saturday before Easter, we gathered in X'oyep and marched to the base. Eight CPT volunteers and about a dozen Mexicans joined about 400 of the Mayans who call themselves "Las Abejas" ("Bees" in Spanish). After opening prayers, one group went to the helicopter pad and changed the large white "H" in the round pad into the word "PAZ" (Spanish for

Just like the women who arrived at the tomb and couldn't find Jesus, we came to the camp and could not find our signs of peace. Although they were not present, I still knew that the miracle of transformation had taken place.

peace—see photo at right). A second group took down the tent and put in its place a large banner that read "PAZ." Ten men dug a hole and placed a new flag pole. Soon beside the Mexican flag flew a flag that read "Peace."

Easter Sunday morning we all gathered before leaving the community. On the way out to the road, we decided to have an Easter morning service together as a team on the spot where the tent had been. As we arrived at the base, we soon saw the helicopter pad had already been changed back to the "H." Although we expected this to happen, we all were shocked and disappointed when we saw that the flag pole had been sawed off and the banners were gone.

We shared a Communion of coffee and tortilla and read the resurrection story from the Gospel of Mark. During the reflection time, teammate Mark Frey shared something that brought new life to the sense of loss I felt: "Coming here this morning and seeing everything gone is like going to the tomb and not finding the body. You know the resurrection has happened; you just can't see it."

Just like the women who arrived at the tomb and couldn't find Jesus, we came to the camp and could not find our signs of peace. Although they were not present, I still knew that the miracle of transformation had taken place. Maybe we won't see the results of it today, but sometime down the road the seed will flourish into something much bigger.

Pierre Shantz is a member of the full-time Christian Peacemaker Corps.

Christian Peacemaker Teams is a program of Brethren, Quaker and Mennonite churches.
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Sign of peace: Christians paint "paz" ("peace") on the army's helicopter pad.

'That all of them may be one'

Radical ecumenism in a time of strife

by Fred Bahnson

[Make] every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.—Ephesians 4:3-6

All Catholics are Zapatistas, all paramilitaries are Evangelicals, and Jesus is a member of the ruling political party. These stereotypes may sound far-fetched, but to many involved in the struggle for land, food and religious freedom in Chiapas, Mexico, they represent long-held truths.

Seeking to induce further conflict among indigenous groups, and using religious divisions as a label on which to pin responsibility for current problems, the Mexican government has fanned flames of unrest between churches. Doing so has allowed the government to justify its military presence as a "peacekeeping force." The situation is exacerbated by the government's citing Romans 13 to keep evangelical paramilitaries under its thumb. Tensions exploded when, in 1998 in the highland community of Acteal, a predominantly Presbyterian paramilitary force slaughtered 45 men, women and children, all members of the pacifist group "Las Abejas" ("the Bees").

If you will be radical Mennonites and we be radical Catholics, we'll meet on the road to peace.—*Catholic bishop Samuel Ruiz*

But into this maelstrom has blown a calming zephyr from the Holy Spirit. Seeking new ways to foster peace between churches in a conflict that is often Christian fighting against Christian, several United Church of Christ missionaries joined hands with the Catholic Diocese of San Cristobal to create a space for ecumenical dialogue. In 1998, with its first course on conflict resolution, the Ecumenical Bible School was born.

The school began with the idea of bringing together Catholics and Presbyterians, but soon Baptists joined the mix. "And then," in the words of Lalo Rodriguez, a Mennonite Central Committee worker teaching at the school, "something funny happened: Catholics and Protestants started reading the Bible together." And once these ecumenical weekend Bible studies began, old divisions and misunderstandings began to crumble away like so many inconsistencies in a logical argument.

A major supporter of this new dialogue in Chiapas was Samuel Ruiz, then bishop of the San Cristobal Diocese. In their first meeting, Ruiz challenged Lalo to "be radically Mennonite" because of the peace witness Mennonites have to offer Chiapas. "If you will be radical Mennonites and we be radical Catholics," Ruiz told Lalo, "we'll meet on the road to peace."

Lalo doesn't hesitate to emphasize the importance of Ruiz's role in breaking down divisions in Chiapas, going so far as to call Ruiz the modern-day reincarnation of Bartolome de Las Casas, a 16th-century bishop in Chiapas who defended the indigenous people against the bloodthirsty Conquistadors.

The Ecumenical Bible School has tried to continue, in a structured setting, the ecumenical reconciliation work begun by Ruiz. The school's theological approach, similar to that of the diocese, uses a theology of liberation.

"We think that if a gospel is preached that doesn't liberate people," Lalo says, "it's not the gospel of Jesus."

The school's emphasis on the liberating nature of the gospel is reflected in the courses it offers: ones that deal with all aspects of people's lives, from the mundane to the theoretical. These include courses in community health, women's issues and organic agriculture, as well as courses more commonly associated with Bible schools, such as Christology, pastoral training and conflict resolution.

The school provides a place for men and women of different denominations to meet and read the Bible, to live and pray together, and to realize they are all brothers and sisters in Christ. The school is open to anyone who wants to come, be they Catholic or Protestant, Zapatista or even paramilitary—all are invited.

"We believe in a peace different from most people's idea of peace here in Chiapas," Lalo says. "Many think peace simply means getting rid of hostile groups. We believe peace means healing the brokenness between people."

When asked about the hardships of working with groups that hate each other, Lalo says, "We (at the school) have had rich experiences that make us forget the difficulties. For instance, we've had groups meet for a weekend Bible study. At the beginning, Catholics and Protestants wouldn't even speak to each other. But by the end of the course, people from one group were asking how they could serve the other group, even asking what specific ways they could pray for one another.

"We aren't a group of experts here at the Bible school," says Lalo. "It's only the Spirit of God that guides us."

Fred Bahnson, Brevard, N.C., was part of a Christian Peacemaker Teams delegation to Chiapas in July.

Clashing perspectives

Think about what you see and hear.

by Rick Carter

Imagine living your entire life in an area roughly the size of Rhode Island. How would you feel if, when you attempted to cross the border, soldiers turned you back because you didn't have permission? Think what it would be like if your only looking glass into the outside world were a television set. This is how it is in the West Bank, where the Israeli government grants freedom of movement to a small number of Palestinians. Everyone else is confined.

One day I traveled from Hebron to Jerusalem in a Palestinian taxi. At the checkpoint the soldier collected all Palestinian identity papers. He went into a guard shack for about 10 minutes, returned the IDs, and we were on our way. About eight kilometers later a military policeman waved the taxi to the side of the road for a spot check. After 10 minutes we were sent on our way again. At neither check did the military authorities even speak to me.

On my return trip to Hebron, the taxi I was riding in was stopped and checked in the same way as before. This time the soldier asked me where I was from. He wanted to know why I was there. He wanted to know why I was with "these people."

As we drove away, a man turned to me and said, "You see what your government supports." The man next to me said his brother was killed by soldiers during the Intifada and that he is raising his brother's daughter.

The despair there is acute. Young people desire what most of us consider normal—a secure home, a good job, a university education, travel, the freedom to choose for oneself—but these are denied them by the occupation. The pressure builds and builds. They feel trapped. They have no hope. They strike at their oppressors with all they have—stones.

In Hebron these are called clashes. In the West they are called riots. What they are is the carefully controlled release of pressure, an allowance for letting off steam, a means of maintaining control.

Clashes are restricted to specific locations. There are three of these locations in Hebron at the borders between the Palestinian-controlled area and the Israeli-occupied section. I saw well-organized clashes. There is a police line from which the soldiers fire their "rubber" bullets (in reality rubber-coated metal bullets). The young men throw stones. By some unseen force the clash suddenly ends, the soldiers leave, and the street returns to normal. It's like picking up a board game and putting it away.

CPT photo

Who stands to gain?: Rick Carter with two Palestinian children in the West Bank

The international media flash pictures of "riots" around the world. People act appalled, the Palestinians are painted as villains, the Israelis are seen as victims, and the occupation is once again justified in the eyes of the world. Clashes are a tool of the occupation; they both relieve internal pressure and serve to justify the occupation.

On days the Israelis don't want clashes they make the Palestinian Authority suppress them. The penalty for not doing so is closure of the West Bank to tourists, thus affecting the Palestinian economy. A clash I witnessed one week in Bethlehem was between the PA and young men. The PA intercepted a group of college students marching toward the Bethlehem checkpoint. This place creates tension because it is segregated into two checkpoints; one for Palestinians and one for everyone else. Palestinians must walk about 700 meters off the main road so that tourists don't see them. Would this be acceptable in North America?

Again the international media pick up the "riots" and flash scenes of Palestinians fighting Palestinians. The world is relieved the Israeli army is here to maintain order. The occupation is therefore justified once more.

Everything that happens in the West Bank is politically motivated and serves someone. Perception is everything. We should always ask ourselves who stands to gain from the event, in this case the clashes, and watch news reports with that perspective. In the case of the recent clashes, Israel has clearly gained at the cost of the Palestinians' public image.

Perception is everything. We should always ask ourselves who stands to gain from the event, in this case the clashes, and watch news reports with that perspective.

Rick Carter, Newton, Kan., is a reservist for Christian Peacemaker Teams. He returned in June from several months in Hebron.

Sidney King

Peter Scott (left), accompanied by Katherine Lemons, films a sunset on the Greek island of Aegina. Scott and Lemons were part of a group of current and former Goshen (Ind.) College students who toured Europe last month for a video on Clayton Kratz. The disappeared Mennonite Central Committee worker visited Greece on his way to the Ukraine in 1920.

Fate of disappeared MCC worker still a mystery after trail of new clues leads to no discoveries

The search for the fate of Clayton Kratz, one of the original Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) workers, will have to continue after a report of his execution could not be confirmed, says a historian investigating the 80-year-old mystery.

The 24-year-old Kratz, a native of Blooming Glen, Pa., and a Goshen (Ind.) College student, was one of three workers sent by the fledgling MCC to do relief work in strife-torn Russia in 1920. He disappeared in the Ukraine in November 1920, two months after his arrival.

Since then, Kratz has become one of 20th-century Mennonitism's great martyrs, as repeated attempts to determine his whereabouts have been fruitless.

But observers hoped for a breakthrough last year with the discovery of information in a diary of C.E. Krehbiel, a longtime General Conference Mennonite Church leader who served as a relief worker in Russia from 1922 to 1923. While in Russia, Krehbiel inquired about Kratz and, according to his diary, was told that Kratz had been taken to Alexandrowsk (now the Ukrainian city of Zaporozhzhia), where he was shot as a spy. Krehbiel's diary is in the Mennonite Library and Archives in North Newton, Kan.

Paul Toews, director of the Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies in Fresno, Calif., investigated the diary's report while in Zaporozhzhia last month. But inquiries to several archives in the city produced nothing on Kratz.

"What this information does is discount that he was taken to Zaporozhzhia, seen in Zaporozhzhia and incarcerated in Zaporozhzhia," says Toews, who makes regular trips to the former Soviet Union to research Mennonite-related holdings in archives and libraries there.

Toews says the next location to check would be the city of Kharkov, the Ukrainian capital at the time of Kratz's disappearance. Krehbiel's diary makes reference to a Kratz-related document in Kharkov.

Toews notes that Kratz was last reported seen being taken from the Mennonite colony of Molotschna and headed northeast, which is more in the direction of Kharkov than Zaporozhzhia, which is northwest of Molotschna.

Toews says he does not have any current plans to go to Kharkov.

In the meantime, MCC, as the organization Kratz was working for at the time of his disappearance, will draft a letter to archive authorities requesting whatever pertinent information they may have in their files.

Among those people following the latest developments in the Kratz mystery is a group of one current and three former Goshen students, who are making a video on Kratz. They traveled in Europe last month to research the video and shoot footage.

The group followed Kratz's route to the Ukraine, traveling from Athens to Istanbul then to Molotschna. The four met Toews in Zaporozhzhia.

"We all wanted to see some of the same things and travel the same ground [as Kratz]," says group member Sidney King of Hickory, N.C.—*Rich Preheim for Meetinghouse*

Missing in action: the price of service

Clayton Kratz was not the only Mennonite Central Committee worker to be reported missing in action. Sixty-two years after Kratz's disappearance in the Ukraine, a second MCC volunteer was lost through wartime violence.

On the night of May 31, 1962, during the early stages of the Vietnam War, Daniel Gerber, a 22-year-old native of Kidron, Ohio, was walking the grounds of the leprosarium in Vietnam where he was working when he was abducted. He was never heard from again.

Editor's note: This story uses the English translation of the Ukrainian spelling of the Ukrainian city of Zaporozhzhia. The city has traditionally been known as Zaporozhye, which is the English translation of the Russian spelling of the name.

Ministering to body as well as to soul

Congregations increasingly adding health programs

When Betty Musselman was in clinical pastoral education, her supervisor asked if she could forget that she was a nurse and instead be a pastor. Today she is filling both positions.

As associate pastor of pastoral care at Zion Mennonite Church in Souderton, Pa., Musselman often goes with older church members to see the doctor. She says that this is helpful when the children of the patient no longer live in the area. Musselman also coordinates several activities at Zion, such as providing meals after hospital stays, hospital and retirement home visitations, health education classes and blood pressure checks.

"I just see [my pastorate] as a worthy position in the congregation," says Musselman, a former nurse. "I see it as a very good combination of nursing and pastoral care."

Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) and the Mennonite Nurses Association are trying to assist congregations in promoting health and wellness, a function of church work they call congregational health ministries.

"Over the years, the art of science and healing became relegated to professionals and spirituality was relegated to the church," says Barbara Reinford, a nurse and MMA consultant for congregational health ministries. "Congregational health ministries … attempts to integrate the ministry of body, mind and spirit, within the framework of a congregation, that promotes caring, healing and wellness."

Health ministries are implemented in a number of ways. Reinford said that some congregations have a nurse in the congregation or health minister, while others start some form of a lay ministry. It can include providing health education, checking blood pressure and helping with visitation.

Reinford says that because of these varied approaches, it is hard to put a number on how many congregations are taking part in health ministries. But she says that it seems to be a growing trend among Mennonites.

"I think that it is broader than many of the ministries that already exist," Reinford says. "Caring and wellness are key to this. They often place an emphasis on things that are not normally emphasized in the congregation."

In Evanston, Ill., Reba Place Church provides office space and equipment to Senior Connections, a ministry that serves about 120 lower-income older adults. It is supported by a dozen area congregations.

Community volunteers do most of the work, such as picking up medicine, driving people to doctor's appointments and simply visiting with seniors. Senior Connections also links people with other resources.

"We are about being a good neighbor," says director Ellen Butkus, one of only two paid Senior Connections staff members. "I also like to put it in terms of community building and being anti-ageist. We value what older adults have to offer.

"Almost every time I hear about a particular need of an individual, being a part of a loving Christian community solves the problem."

Butkus advises people who want to start up a health ministry to follow their heart. "I think the Lord will really bless it," she says. "It is really a wonderful affirmation of wholeness that comes from not ignoring a physical part of our makeup."—*Brian Hook*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

Joyfully noisy

Carlos Villalobos (center), a church planter in Sanford, N.C., and other Hispanic participants at Eastern Mennonite Missions' School for Apostles contribute to a multilingual worship service during the July 17-21 event. About 150 people from 10 states and six countries attended School for Apostles, an annual retreat for church planters held in Quarryville, Pa.

Mennonite singers retreat to Colorado

More than 40 singers gathered July 21-23 in Aurora, Colo., to lift a variety of songs over the Front Range. The occasion was a musical retreat, sponsored by the Mennonite Society for Musical Heritage.

The retreat was a first for the 2-year-old organization, which was formed to promote Mennonite music and its history.

"Many people love to sing, not just Mennonites," said Arlen Hershberger, retreat choir director. "However, we do have a special tradition that gives a certain spirit to an event such as this one."

More than 200 people joined the choir on Sunday morning at Peace Mennonite Church in Aurora, which hosted the retreat. Songs performed covered a variety of styles, including "In the Rifted Rock I'm Resting," "O Have You Not Heard" and "We Are People of God's Peace."

Retreat organizers hope the event can become an annual one and maybe even become national in scope.

MVS workers put wheels to their faith

Bicycle clubs reach children in Arizona and Indiana

One hobby shared by two young men from Canada has dozens of children and youth moving in Arizona and Indiana.

Colin Bock and Rick Unger became friends years ago at First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. One of their common interests was bicycles. “We spent a lot of time in my driveway building bikes,” Unger says.

The idea of a bike club fit because it was a way to draw in kids from the neighborhood.

— Colin Bock

They also had a desire to do service. Bock and his wife, Monica, applied to Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) and went to Tucson, Ariz., in August 1999. Part of his assignment was with BICAS (Bicycle Inter-Community Action and Salvage), a nonprofit organization that gets young people involved in repairing and recycling bicycles. They learn marketable skills and have a bicycle if they want one, some income from selling the reconditioned and recycled bikes and improved self-esteem to show for it.

Then a couple of months into the Bocks’ assignment, Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, the Tucson unit’s supporting congregation, began talking more specifically about the peace center it had been dreaming about for years.

“The idea of a bike club fit because it was a way to draw in kids from the neighborhood,” Bock says, “and the church owned a one-car garage that we could use for it.”

So in February, Bock started the Zuni Avenue Bike Club, based on the BICAS model. “It’s a place where kids can come and learn to repair anything on a bike,” he says. “They go through a series of eight workshops. At the end, you have four or five bikes that have been completely overhauled, and you can sell them to put more money back into the project. A kid can complete all eight workshops or volunteer 24 hours of time, helping others build bikes, cleaning up, whatever. In exchange for the work, the kids get to build their own bike.

“Almost all the parts are donated or recycled. Usually the only things we have to buy are the rubber or plastic parts, like tires and tubes, and maybe seats or handlebar grips.”

Meanwhile, Unger went to Evansville, Ind., with MVS. Almost as soon as he arrived in January, Calvin Kimbrough, a member of the Evansville MVS support committee, began talking to him about starting a bike club.

Kimbrough tells a story to illustrate why he thought a bike club would be good for inner-city children: “Nick had wanted a bicycle forever. When he got one, he and that bike were inseparable. Right after Rick arrived in Evansville, we noticed that Nick didn’t have his bike. He said it had ‘gone away.’ Well, it turned out the bike had a flat tire. No one in his family knew how to fix the tire.

“The myth of consumerism is that when something is broken, you just throw it away.”

Leaning on his friend Bock for advice, Unger started the Patchwork Bicycle Club. “We have the bikes donated, sitting ready to be used and worked on,” Unger says. “But we don’t have all the tools that Colin does, and in Evansville, where it’s a lot more humid than Tucson, we can’t recycle as many parts as in Tucson.”

Even with his limited resources, there are things Unger can do. He teaches some simple maintenance techniques and has started regular group rides and family rides.Unger is also developing a “helmet library” from which people can borrow helmets as well as donate helmets that can be given away.

Both Bock and Uunger say it has been amazing how their hobby has become a way to reach inner-city children. “There wasn’t any reason for it except divine intervention,” Bock says.

He tells about one girl in the Zuni Avenue Bike Club. “A family counselor at her school noticed that her attendance had suddenly improved,” Bock says. “She came to the bike club every day, and it was all she talked about at school. When her grades came in at the end of the year, she came to show all of the adults at the bike club. She was so proud.”—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM news services*

Mennonite Central Committee invites applications for the position of

DIRECTOR of International Program

Key qualifications include: International leadership experience; Understanding of global mission; Ability to think and plan strategically within a complex organization.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking.

Starting date: **June 4, 2001**
Location: **AKRON, Pennsylvania**
Applications will be accepted through DECEMBER 1, 2000

Direct inquiries to: Charmayne Brubaker or Becky Stahly, MCC Human Resources, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, phone 717-859-1151, fax: 717-859-2171, email: cdb@mcc.org or rss@mcc.org

Urban workers hold first global meeting

GOSHEN, Ind.—The church needs to shift its understanding of the city from the image of a corrupt Babylon to the hope and promise of the New Jerusalem, workers in urban ministries were told at an international, first-of-its-kind conference last month.

"It's an empowering image to see the city as a place where God is already present," said Stuart Murray, a consultant on church planting and urban ministry in England and the editor of the journal *Anabaptism Today.*

Murray was the keynote speaker at the Global Urban Workers Gathering July 28-30 on the Goshen (Ind.) College campus. It was the first meeting to bring together Anabaptists to discuss how Anabaptism influences urban ministry, and how urban ministry in turn impacts Anabaptism. The event was sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions, Commission on Overseas Mission, Commission on Home Ministries, and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind. The gathering brought together 80 people from 19 countries, including conference urban ministry directors, pastors, seminary students, MBM and COM workers and staff, and AMBS faculty.

"Yes, there is in fact an Anabaptist understanding of urban mission," said John Powell, director of MBM's Evangelism and Church Development department. He encouraged participants to use the weekend as an opportunity to begin articulating that understanding.

Participants formed small groups to examine three urban ministry case studies and to articulate insights about Anabaptist theology that emerged from the discussions. Worship services began and ended each day, emphasizing praise, storytelling and prayer for one another.

Powell noted the importance of worship and prayer, not just for the weekend event but for every area of urban ministry. "If Christ isn't at the center, maybe we all ought to pack our bags and go home," he said.

Participants expressed hope for continued forums for discussing Anabaptist urban ministry around the world. "Urban mission expertise has been associated mostly with a North American context," said James Krabill, MBM vice president for Mission Advocacy and Communication and former worker in Ivory Coast. "Workers sent overseas from North America don't really get a significant urban orientation. We often end up in the cities, but we haven't always profited from the work done in the North American context. At the same time, urban ministry contexts elsewhere in the world aren't all the same. We need to continue this interchange, in both directions."—*Bethany Swope of MBM and GCMC news services*

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Left to right: John Powell, Jeff Wright and Dale Bauman spend time in prayer at the Global Urban Workers Gathering, held July 28-30 in Goshen, Ind. Powell is director of Mennonite Board of Missions Evangelism and Church Development, Wright is urban ministry director for Pacific Southwest Conference, and Bauman is a consultant for MBM Evangelism and Church Development.

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by the way ...

Of the approximately 350 registrants at the 1936 Mennonite World Conference assembly in Amsterdam, only seven were from the United States.—*Harold S. Bender* by Al Keim

EMM president recovering from heart attack

SALUNGA, Pa.—Richard Showalter, president of Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM), is recuperating from open-heart surgery after suffering a mild heart attack while vacationing in the Virginia Beach, Va., area.

Showalter was struck on Aug. 6 and had surgery at a Virginia Beach hospital on Aug. 10. Tests showed extensive blockage of arteries to his heart but that he sustained no major damage from the heart attack. He is now at home in Landisville, Pa.

"We are grateful for the many signs of God's direction and healing through this event," says Showalter, EMM's president since 1994.—*EMM News Service*

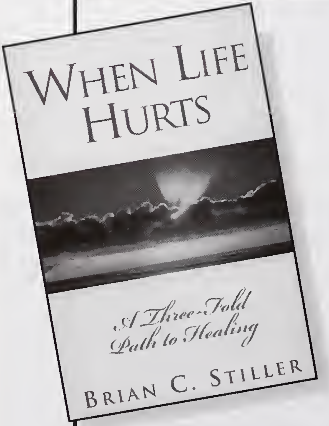
Montreal pastor to lead evangelical group

MONTREAL—Daniel Genest, pastor of a Mennonite church plant in Montreal, has been named president of the Alliance Francophone des Protestants Évangéliques due Québec (AFPEQ), the French counterpart to the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

Named to the AFPEQ board was Richard Lougheed. He and Genest are co-church planters of a Mennonite congregation, Communaut de Réconciliation, that received 12 charter members on June 12. The congregation plant is supported by the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada and has also received funding from City on a Hill, an urban ministry program of the Commission on Home Ministries.—*GCMC News Service*

MEDA's legacy continues in Russia

WINNIPEG—Two years after concluding its work in Russia, Mennonite Economic Development Associates' impact continues. Sozidaniye, a business incubator in the city of Zelenograd started by MEDA and the Canadian International Development Agency, continues to promote the development of small businesses. MEDA still has a seat on the organization's board. The Russia Canadian Centre, created by MEDA in 1998, also promotes small business development.—*MEDA News Service.*



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When Life Hurts is dedicated to helping people who are in pain or crisis. **Brian C. Stiller** describes how he and others have been guided by the three-fold path to healing—hope, faith, and love mark this path.

Stiller does not deny pain's existence or suggest easy solutions, but he does provide a way through suffering. This journey will nourish our souls, release us from despair, mend our broken hearts, and show us how to live happy and spiritually content lives.

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Births

Bolton, Nolan Charles, Aug. 6, to Lorie and Todd Bolton, Souderton, Pa.

Brassington, Caiden Glen, July 14, to Andrea (Freeburne) and Darren Brassington, Fresno, Calif.

Byler, Jesse Thomas, July 18, to Kevin and Sandy (Hertzler) Byler, Westminster, S.C.

Chamberlain, Cole Kenneth, July 26, to Chris and Mary (Yoder) Chamberlain, Goshen, Ind.

Fellers, Isaiah D., Aug. 1, to Adam and Cathy (Oswald) Fellers, Centreville, Mich.

Hochstetler, Emily Elizabeth, July 31, to Doug and Heidi (Zendt) Hochstetler, Harrisonburg, Va.

Schneider, Trenton Daniel, July 27, to Adam and Michelle Schneider, Hutchinson, Kan.

Troyer, Emily Rose, July 26, to Betti (Ritter) and David Troyer, Hartville, Ohio.

Unruh, Tanner Jaymes, Aug. 2, to Tonya (Litwiller) and Travis Unruh, Peoria, Ill.

Weaver, Jared Michael, July 23, to Carla (Kennell) and Lyle Weaver, Goshen, Ind.

Wiemer, Hadley Raye, July 23, to Mike and Stacy (Friesen) Wiemer, Henderson, Neb.

Wyse, Dakota Mattias, July 30, to Lisa Hiebert and Donovan Wyse, Fairview, Mich.

Zimmerman, Janessa Marie, July 23 to Karmen (Yoder) and Phil Zimmerman, Lititz, Pa.

Marriages

Arnold/Moser: Samantha Arnold, Croghan, N.Y., and Bradley Moser, Carthage, N.Y., July 4.

Badger/Shoemaker: Henry Badger, Niagara Falls, Ont., and Alice Shoemaker, Glendale, Ariz., June 17 at Sedona, Ariz.

Bagley/Schloneger: Melissa Bagley, Dayton, Ohio, and Mark Schloneger, Dalton, Ohio, July 30, at Dayton.

Baumgartner/Miller: Craig Baumgartner, Versailles, Mo., and Kendra Miller, Versailles, June 10 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Fortuna, Mo.

Crilow/Dye: Ryan Crilow, Holmesville, Ohio, and Tricia Dye, Millersburg, Ohio, July 29 at Martins Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg.

Histand/Kropf: Kara Histand, Portland, Ore., and Ron Kropf, Hubbard, Ore., July 15 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard.

Horst/Stutzman: Melodie Horst, Harrisonburg, Va., and Kyle Stutzman, Waynesboro, Va., July 29 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Kindy/Klassen: Jeremy Kindy, Wooster, Ohio, and Rebecca Klassen, Newton, Kan., July 29 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Landis/Smith: Julie Landis, Goshen, Ind., and Marc Smith, Casper, Wyo., July 8 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Martin/Martin: Craig Martin, Harrisonburg, Va., and Krista Martin, Harrisonburg, July 15 at Martin Chapel, Harrisonburg.

Martin/Tuper: Matthew Martin, Croghan, N.Y., and NaDina Tuper, Croghan, July 1.

Myers/Roynon: Keith Anthony Myers, Archbold, Ohio, and Taryn Jill Roynon, Archbold, July 29 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Springer/Subaiya: Ryan Springer, Goshen, Ind., and Nisha Subaiya, Anantapur, India, July 1 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Staskel/Thomas: Dan Staskel, Frackville, Pa., and Rebecca Thomas, Lititz, Pa., July 6 at Providenciales, Turks and Caicos Islands.

Stutzman/Swihart: Lynn Stutzman, Goshen, Ind., and Barbara Swihart, Goshen, June 10 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Deaths

Hoffer, Helen Jones, 77, Aberdeen, Idaho, died June 3. Spouse: Lloyd Hoffer. Parents: George and Ruth Breen Jones (deceased). Other survivors: children Lloyd Paul, Terrence, Dallas, Randall, Brent, Marsha Friesen, Sandra Knapp; 24 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren. Funeral: June 6 at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen.

Hoover, Blanche Shotzberger, 87, Lititz, Pa., died July 21. Spouse: Leslie Hoover (deceased). Parents: Franklin and Anna Mae Detra Shotzberger (deceased). Survivors: children Meredyth Ann Witmer, Edward; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; two stepgrandchildren; two stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: July 26 at Kinzer Mennonite Church, Kinzers, Pa.

King, Wendell Roy, 53, Camas, Wash., died June 23, Spouse: Esther Wiens King. Parents: Donald (deceased) and Thelma Yoder King. Other survivors: children Dale, Tony; two grandchildren. Memorial service: June 26 at Peace Mennonite Church, Portland, Ore.

Lantz, John, 85, Harrisonburg, Va., died July 28. Spouse: Maude Geil Lantz. Other survivors: children John, Miriam Hall, Becky VanHook, June, Ruth Ann Dixon, Joyce Wenger, Emily, Stephen; nine grandchildren. Funeral: July 30 at Broadway, Va.

Martin, Sylvia Amstutz, 85, Apple Creek, Ohio, died July 26. Spouse: (1st) Victor Amstutz (deceased); (2nd) Mose Martin (deceased). Parents: Amos and Fannie Zuercher Amstutz (deceased). Survivors: children Kathleen Atterholt, Herb, Stu, Pam McMullin; 10 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; 19 stepgrandchildren; 34 stepgreat-grandchildren; two stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 29 at Kidron, Ohio.

Metzler, Grace, 93, Lancaster, Pa., died July 28. Spouse: Homer Metzler (deceased). Survivors: children Jean Hoover, Ruth Nissley; 10 grandchildren; 29 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 31 at Erb Mennonite Church, Lititz, Pa.

Reeb, John, 84, Metamora, Ill., died July 29 of a brain tumor. Spouse: Minerva Reeb. Parents: Henry and Katie Kennell Reeb (deceased). Other survivors: children Joanne Hostetler, Paul, Susan Hovey, Rollin; 12 grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren. Funeral: July 31 at Metamora.

Trissel, Kristy Michelle, 15, Dayton, Va., died July 16. Parents: Gregory and Lory Trissel. Funeral: July 19 at Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church.

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classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Friendship Community**, Lititz, Pa., is actively seeking applicants for the ***program supervisor*** position. If you are interested in assisting adults with mental disabilities, call Amy Horst at 717-656-2466 ext. 102; email <amy.horst@friendship-comm.org>. Christian mission. EOE

- **Opportunities for service!** Eastern Mennonite Missions has current ***medical opportunities*** as follows: an experienced doctor for Nepal, a doctor for Albania and a nurse and/or doctor for Guatemala.

  If you have interest in exploring any of these or other current opportunities for youth to adult, call Mark Emerson or Ruth Durborow at 717-898-2251.

- **25th anniversary celebration** of the ***St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship***, Sunday, Nov. 12; gathering at 9 a.m., worship at 10, meal at noon. All are invited to come celebrate 25 years of growth and ministry in St. Louis.

  For lodging or information, contact Sheila Yoder-Baer, 636-584-0231; email <yoderbaer@juno.com>.

- **Waterford Mennonite Church**, a 400-member congregation in Goshen, Ind., seeks a half-time ***minister to youth*** to lead the church's ministry with 6th- to 12th-grade youth. Candidates should have a vibrant and mature faith in Jesus Christ and a commitment to the Mennonite church.

  For a job description please contact Joe Miller, <joe@waterfordchurch.org>.

- **Emmanuel Mennonite Church**, a small, dedicated congregation located next to the University of Florida in Gainesville, is seeking a full-time ***pastor*** and/or an interim pastor. North central Florida offers a vibrant cultural life and a wide range of outdoor activities.

  Contact Fred Brenneman, Search Committee Chair, 352-372-6721; or email <brenhms@aol.com>.

- **Sharing Programs, Inc.**, Lancaster, Pa., a property/casualty mutual aid program, seeks ***sales and marketing manager*** to lead sales, marketing and member services functions. Requires strong managerial skills, experience in sales, marketing and long-range planning. Experience in property/casualty insurance industry desired.

  Send resume to: Sharing Programs Inc., attn. Human Resources, P.O. Box 10367, Lancaster, PA 17605-0367; email <hr@splmc.com>. Visit <www.sharingprograms.com>.

- **Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship**, a worshiping congregation of approximately 170 in Goshen, Ind., seeks an ***additional pastor*** to serve on their leadership team. This person will have primary responsibility for the preaching and teaching ministry as well as vision and mission planning.

  Written inquiries, resumes and Ministerial Leadership Information forms should be sent to Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, c/o Search Committee, 2509 Berkey Ave., Goshen, IN 46526. Contacts should be made on or before Sept. 10, 2000.

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** is seeking a teaching applicant for ***middle school language arts/coordinator*** to begin in mid-autumn. Interested people should contact Kay Predmore, 1050 E. Newport Road, Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-9551.

- **Philadelphia Mennonite High School** seeks full-time ***Spanish teacher*** and full-time ***social studies teacher*** to begin as soon as possible. Contact Marlene Brubaker, Philadelphia Mennonite High School, 860 N. 24th St., Philadelphia, PA 19130.

- **Camp Hebron** has the following positions available:

  Reservation clerk: Primary responsibility for reservations and group bookings for year-round retreat ministry. Must be organized, able to handle multiple details and have a positive and pleasant phone manner.

  Head cook: Oversees preparation, serving and cleanup of meals for camp and retreat groups.

  All staff must be able to serve on ministry team. Send resume and cover letter to Lanny Millette, Camp Hebron, 957 Camp Hebron Road, Halifax, PA 17032.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat** (Pocono Mtns. of northeastern Pa.) seeks ***business manager***—ministry-minded person with business/financial training and experience to manage accounting, retail and front office functions. This multifaceted camp ministry serves over 20,000 guests annually. Responsibilities include staff management, financial reporting, annual audit preparation, insurance oversight and computer systems administration. Salary and benefits package. On-camp housing available. Position open immediately.

  Send resume to Executive Director, Spruce Lake Retreat, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 800-822-7505; email <retreat@enter.net>; fax 570-595-0328.

- **Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference** is seeking a ***conference regional minister*** to serve churches in Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee, except for congregations in Elkhart and eastern St. Joseph counties of Indiana. This minister will provide leadership and ministry with overseers, pastors and congregations to develop excellence in spiritual leadership; coordinate the development of resources to help strengthen congregations committed to the mission and ministry of Jesus. They will serve up to 35 congregations and their pastors, and be a member of the staff ministry team of IN-MI Mennonite Conference. Applicants will possess a vibrant Christian faith in a Mennonite perspective, will be available at least by January 2001, and will have some professional training and at least six years pastoral experience. We encourage women, men and people from under-represented groups to apply.

  Interested people may submit a current Ministerial Leadership Information form with references to Indiana-Michigan Conference Search Committee, c/o Jerry Albrecht, 1427 McCormick Dr., Nappanee, IN 46550, by Sept. 6, 2000. For more information call or email Jerry Albrecht at 219-773-7633 or <albrecht@bnin.net>.

- **Is God calling you** to use your administrative and leadership skills in a new location? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for capable people to fill these and other leadership roles starting June 2001:

  Country director, Jakarta, Indonesia: This job, which could be shared, involves leading the planning and budgeting process for the 25-member MCC team, living in six different locations. Current programs include rural community development, university teaching, church relations and conflict mediation and peace building. The director(s) will also have the opportunity to learn to know and work closely with some of the 75,000 Mennonites who call this tropical archipelago home. Four to six months of language study would be provided.

  Country representative, El Salvador: Doing this job involves working with an experienced, committed MCC team, community and church leaders to discern new ways to do God's will in El Salvador, an ever-changing country that is slowly building a culture of reconciliation and peace after more than a decade of war. Key qualifications: Spanish language proficiency and team facilitation skills.

  To learn more about these two jobs, or other leadership roles within MCC, contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151; email <cdb@mail.mcc.org>.

Mennonite Central Committee invites applications for

BANGLADESH

Country director

Starting date: **January 5, 2001**
Key qualifications: **Proven ability to lead large, diverse agency or company.**

Associate director

Starting date: **January 5, 2001**
Key qualifications: **Ability and strong interest in helping MCC volunteers adapt to life and work in Bangladesh.**

Staff development director

Starting date: **Immediately**
Key qualifications: **Ability to design and set in place staff development program, including policies, procedures and structure.**

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Human Resources
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All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership and nonviolent peacemaking.

by Gordon Houser

Want to start an argument in some circles? Mention creationism and evolution. As with many conflicts, this one is exacerbated by careless language, the refusal to define terms.

Not all creationists believe the earth is only 10,000 years old, and not all evolutionists are atheistic. I imagine most scientists would reject such simplistic labels.

As this debate plays itself out in our political, educational and religious cultures, sides form and fling mud at each other. Can we come to a common goal of pursuing truth, which is supposedly at the heart of both science and religion?

Amid the plethora of books addressing the interplay of science and religion, let me mention three. These aren't necessarily the best or the most popular, but they make points worth considering.

Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology by William A. Dembski (InterVarsity, 1999, $19.99) argues from probability theory that the complexity that exists in the natural world cannot be the result of chance. A mathematician, he reduces natural laws to mathematical functions and shows how improbable it is for such laws to exist without some intelligent agent involved.

For me, a nonscientist, he is convincing. Accepting the assumptions of atheistic evolution, he argues, would be like believing one could toss a number of Scrabble pieces onto a table and have the letters spell out the words to a Shakespearean sonnet. Rationally, some intelligent agent needs to be involved.

Dembski rightly attacks the assumptions of naturalism (that nothing exists outside nature), but he hurts his cause by quoting extremists. While he does not dispute "low-level facts of current evolutionary biology," he calls naturalism "idolatry by another name."

Dembski uses the logical concept of explanatory power to draw a useful relationship between theology and science, but his forays into theology are not always convincing and at times are appalling.

John Polkinghorne, in his small book *Quarks, Chaos and Christianity: Questions to Science and Religion* (Crossroad, 1994, $9.95), takes a more conciliatory approach. He calls science and religion "intellectual cousins under the skin. Both are searching for motivated belief." By this he means that "each must base its conclusions on an interplay between interpretation and experience."

Polkinghorne is a former professor of mathematical physics who became an Anglican priest. He writes in an accessible way that celebrates both science and religious belief. In an intriguing chapter called "Can a Scientist Pray?" he argues that we can take science seriously and still believe there is room for our action—and God's—in the world. He resonates with Dembski when he writes, "It is a coherent possibility that God interacts with the history of his creation by means of 'information input' into its open physical process."

God Exists: New Light on Science and Creation by Joseph Davydov (Schreiber Publishing, 2000, $24.95) takes a much bolder approach, an unabashed scientific argument for the existence of God.

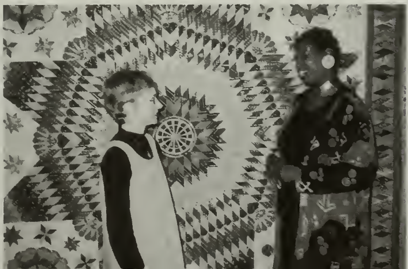
Davydov, a physicist who was trained in the Soviet Union, seems obsessed with Soviet, totalitarian atheism. Nevertheless, his argument is intriguing. He writes: "The scientific theory of the evolutionary development of the Universe [sic] confirms rather than discredits the Bible. Evolutionary theory is not opposed to the Bible but to atheism."

He goes on to argue that the six stages in the evolutionary development of the universe correspond with the six days of creation in Genesis 1. These days, however, cover billions of years. The Hebrew language had no words for concepts such as "stage" or "epoch."

I can't argue with the same confidence as Dembski or Davydov, though I agree with their questioning the easy assumptions of much evolutionary theory. Alan Padgett, in *Books & Culture* (July/August), writes, "Scientists, especially in popular writing and speaking, sound as if they have well-confirmed theories about how life came about on this planet. And they do not."

All truth is God's truth. We need not fear science or disparage religion. Padgett adds, "Christianity is just as true if natural science can explain the origins of life, as it will be if intelligent design ends up being correct."

Let's seek truth in a humble manner.



People's Place photo

films

Amid the dismal offering of movies at the cineplex—the gross-out comedies and special effects extravaganzas—you may find these two excellent foreign films:

East-West (PG-13) is a French film that shows the horror of life in Soviet Russia after World War II. A Russian tries to help his French wife escape back to France. Harrowing.

The Color of Paradise (PG) is a beautiful, beautiful Iranian (yes, Iranian) film about a blind boy who longs to find God. His desperate father, who wants to be rid of the boy, searches for love.

art

The exhibit "Menno Simons: Image, Art and Identity," is open at the Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite Historical Society through Oct. 28. It features original portraits of Menno Simons, Dutch Mennonite works of art and contemporary expressions of Menno.

"Amish Quilts and African American Quilts: Classics from Two Traditions" is at The People's Place Quilt Museum, Intercourse, Pa., through Oct. 31. Phyllis Pellman Good, curator of the exhibit (left in photo at left), discusses the antebellum Starburst Quilt with Phoebe Bailey, director of the "Living the Experience" project. Check the museum's detailed website at www.ppquiltmuseum.com.

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Rich Preheim

Start spreading the news

The Mennonite name ought to stand the world over for certain definite ideals and principles.
—Harold S. Bender

Consider the world around us, then consider the distinctives of our Mennonite faith, and it becomes evident that we have something to offer with our particular understandings of the Christian life:

- As bullets and bombs explode around us in futile attempts to resolve disagreements, we advocate the use of nonviolence. Not only has warfare in its many manifestations been unable to resolve conflict, it is in stark opposition to Christ's message.
- As economic and social ills permeate and contaminate our world, we proclaim the need for justice, without which we cannot have peace. A life can be taken by a gun or a knife. But a life can also be taken by the denial of economic, educational and political opportunities.
- As our neighbors near and far continue to suffer because of natural and human-made disasters, we provide helping hands and cups of cold water.
- As society increasingly pushes individualism and personal autonomy, we believe in the community, accountability and discernment of the gathered body of believers.

Make no mistake about it: The world needs the message Mennonites have to offer. Meeting that need is our challenge now more than ever—to which there is good news and bad news.

Imagine a Mennonite on CNN or in the *New York Times* sharing about restorative justice, home demolitions or the nature of community.

First the bad news. Earlier this month at their annual convention, 72 percent of Evangelical Mennonite Church delegates approved changing the denomination's name to the Conference of Evangelical Churches. While that was just shy of the 75 percent required for passage, it is nevertheless a disturbing development.

One doesn't have to be called a Mennonite to be an advocate for Christian peace, justice, service and community. But our congregations are filled with people who have sought out Mennonites because they associated the name with those historic Anabaptist hallmarks.

Dropping the Mennonite name, then, indicates a reluctance to be identified with what made them Mennonite in the first place. That has been the case with the Evangelical Mennonite Brethren, Evangelical United Mennonites, Mennonite Brethren in Christ and others who changed their names and have disappeared from the Anabaptist landscape to take up residence in mainstream evangelicalism.

The good news is that while some people, intentionally or unintentionally, want to let go of Mennonite discipleship ideals, others want to promote them even more vigorously.

The proposal for Mennonite Church USA denominational communication efforts includes getting Mennonite news and perspectives into the mainstream, secular media. Among the goals are promoting coverage of Mennonite stories by regional and national TV, radio, magazines, newspapers and other outlets and providing to print media opinion articles by Mennonites about pertinent concerns.

We have in our midst people with expertise on world issues and problems. But that expertise often runs counter to the world's conventional wisdom, and much of the media don't even know it's out there. It will take a concerted effort to make reporters and editors aware of Mennonite newsworthiness.

This could have extraordinary potential to carry our message farther than our mission and service workers, church planters and peace evangelists could ever envision. When issues pop up such as prison reform, Israeli-Palestinian relations and the effects of the Internet, imagine a Mennonite on CNN or in the *New York Times* sharing about restorative justice, home demolitions or the nature of community. That would be a fantastic opportunity to witness to millions of people who may never otherwise encounter Mennonite belief.

This may all be dreaming. But for the sake of building God's kingdom, such dreams are necessary if we who believe in what it means to be Mennonite are going to spread our message to a world that needs it.—*rp*

the Mennonite

August 29, 2000

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a new approach to teaching faith to high school youth

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Election issue

As election season intensifies, I appreciated the focus on the death penalty in the July 25 issue. That same day's mail included *AACAP News,* the magazine of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, reporting that with increasing frequency, juveniles are being tried as adults in the United States. U.S. law allows the death penalty to be given to those over 16, making the United States and Iran the only countries in the world that apply the death penalty to such a young age. At the time of the *AACAP News* article, "this year alone, three men were executed for crimes they committed at age 17, and there are 70 inmates on death row who committed murder prior to their 18th birthday." The article closes with concern about the message of killing another person as an answer "in this era when we are trying to combat violence and teach tolerance and respect for human life."

Mennonite readers can join with others in bringing these facts into discussions with election candidates and other government officials as we continue to bring to light the lie that capital punishment has anything to do with justice.—*Deb Bergen, North Newton, Kan.*

Confused and questioning

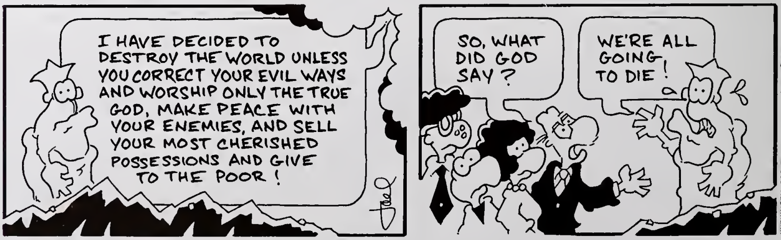
Help! I am one confused Mennonite. There are some ideas and opinions promoted by the church and this magazine that I fail to understand. Will somebody answer the following?

- Why do we spend so much money for health care in the last months of our lives in order to postpone going to heaven?
- Why can we forgive our president's sexual misconduct and not John Howard Yoder's?
- Why is pacifism the main plank of the Mennonite platform when we readily admit that the kingdom will be filled with many who participated in wars?
- Why are we teaching our children that killing on TV or video games is tolerated but protecting our country with guns is not?
- Why do we promote vegetarianism, which the Bible condemns, but prohibit the consumption of alcohol, which the Bible supports?
- Why do we condemn capital punishment of our worst criminals with loud demonstrations but by our silence condone abortion?
- Why do we give our goods to pagans around the world, regardless of their lifestyle, while tolerating ill will among our own brethren simply because we see some character flaws?
- Why do we call for dismantling our military, whose purpose is to protect, while glibly patronizing Hollywood, which destroys us?
- Why do we support our government's policy to give money to unwed mothers but fail to ask for relief from the marriage tax penalty?
- Why is fornication considered to be shameful among heterosexuals and but not among homosexuals?
- Why is a diligent, hardworking, prosperous man considered to be greedy while the indolent, self-indulgent, poor man is to be pitied?
- Why do we support our government's wasteful welfare system instead of claiming it as a rightful duty of the church?
- Why are we so vocal in the criticism of our Western world's politicians but silent toward oppressive communist dictators?
- Why are our entrepreneurial business people maligned but their workers who risk nothing are considered virtuous?
- Why do we seek pastors who are strong leaders but deny them the authority to make decisions?—*Harley Hofstetter, Dalton, Ohio*

Working, resting, praying, suffering

Your occasional feature "Mennos at Work" has some value. It is, however, almost like having a "Mennos Eat Pie" or "Mennos Make Quilts"

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


I HAVE DECIDED TO DESTROY THE WORLD UNLESS YOU CORRECT YOUR EVIL WAYS AND WORSHIP ONLY THE TRUE GOD, MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR ENEMIES, AND SELL YOUR MOST CHERISHED POSSESSIONS AND GIVE TO THE POOR!
SO, WHAT DID GOD SAY?
WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE!

PONTPUDL@AOL.COM © Joel Kauffmann

the Mennonite
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the Mennonite
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readers say

column because of their inherent part of the "ethnic" Mennonite culture. Far more unique and interesting to me would be a "Mennos at Rest" (focusing on Sabbath observances) or a "Mennos at Prayer" column. Another one, especially for me afflicted with a disabling chronic illness, would be a "Mennos Suffering" column that could include reflections on dealing with a variety of life's difficulties. (Or might that be considered "Mennos Whining"?)—*Gary Olsen-Hasek, Gresham, Ore.*

Break the silence

I wholeheartedly agree with David Clymer (Readers Say, Aug. 8). It is a strange situation that we, as Mennonites, feel so strongly and protest in many different settings, and rightfully so in most cases, but when it comes to the unborn, we are silent. The American Medical Association has said there is never a medical reason for partial-birth abortion, and yet we continue to allow this as a woman's choice. We have been silent long enough. May the Lord wake us up and make us take a fresh look at this issue.—*Ruby Nissley, LaJara, Colo.*

Reading about weeding

Two letter writers (Paul H. Martin, June 20, and Lelyn Saner, June 27) appealed to the parable of the weeds (Matthew 13:24-30) for guidance on membership in Mennonite Church USA. Martin apparently assumes that the field in the parable represents the church. But Jesus specifically identifies the field to be the world (verse 38). According to the Believers Church Bible Commentary on Matthew (pp. 216, 220), the weeds parable does not set forth how believers should deal with evil or sin in the church, a matter that Jesus subsequently describes in Matthew 18:15-20.—*Dale Swartzendruber, Lincoln, Neb.*

Cover photo by Luke Golobitsh

The Q class

A new approach to catechism

Luke Golobitsh—for illustration only

by Jim S. Amstutz

As the Spring Sunday school quarter drew closer, I sent out the same letter of inquiry to older high school youth and young adults who had not yet joined our church. I outlined the format and timetable of the catechism class. I reminded them of our Believers' Church tradition and that if they didn't feel ready, the class would be offered again next year at the same time. I made the same bulletin announcements and followed up the letters with phone calls. And for the second year in a row I got the same response. "Pastor, I just don't feel ready."

What was I missing?

Then it occurred to me that the same forces at work in our postmodern, post-Christian culture were affecting our youth and young adults at West Swamp Mennonite Church. Why should I think otherwise? It was too obvious to notice. When I was in high school in the early 1970s, we had 12 to 15 courses to choose from. The local guidance counselor said there are 60 to choose from today. Part-time jobs, sports, music, college, career, friends—the list goes on. Like clubs in a golf bag, the "religion club" is just one more option to be played as needed. And usually it's the sand wedge, called upon when we are trapped in a bunker. In the meantime, we play the clubs that keep us on the fairways of life.

I was unprepared for the next session. When I asked, "Who feels ready to take the next step of faith?" all five said they were prepared to confess their faith in Jesus Christ and be baptized. I knew the Holy Spirit was among us that day.

So after the sixth discouraging phone call it finally hit me. It was time to think outside the box of catechism class. The result was "Q." A second letter to the same group of young people suggested that instead of giving answers to questions they weren't asking, we would start with their questions. What is on your mind about faith and life? We would also spend some quiet time with God. Listening to what God is trying to say to us today. We would use the Scriptures and a journal to do that. We also wanted to become a community together and spend quality time as a group. Worship, team-building and group prayer would be part of our quest for God. Five youth said, "Sounds good."

We found Morton Kelsey's little book *Spiritual Living in a Material World* (New City Press, 1998) a helpful guide. We read a chapter as homework and discussed questions raised by the book. Journaling assignments included looking for kingdom references in the Gospels and responding to the question of Jesus in John 1:35-38a: "What do you want?" I made a personal commitment to pray for Allison, Jamie, Jesse, Kate and Mark each week. I made home visits, attended sporting events and took them out for ice cream. We held hands as we prayed together after each class. We became a small group.

Toward the end of the class I assigned the formal questions of baptism from *The Minister's Manual*. I asked them to look these over and respond to them in their journals by writing their statements of faith. I was unprepared for the next session. When I asked, "Who feels ready to take the next step of faith?" all five said they were prepared to confess their faith in Jesus Christ and be baptized. I knew the Holy Spirit was among us that day. They felt safe and secure among peers to talk about their emerging faith and readiness.

What made the difference? Was it prayer, the Kelsey book, journaling, more ownership of the process? Most likely a combination of all the Q elements—Q for quintessential, defined in the dictionary as "the fifth element," something other than fire, water, air, earth. Beyond what we can see and touch in a material world is the life of the Spirit. The Q class of 2000 was a transformative experience for five young people who came to faith, and it was a life-changing experience for their pastor as well.

Jim S. Amstutz is pastor of West Swamp Mennonite Church, Quakertown, Pa.

Banana guns and K'NEX jails

Teaching children peaceful play

by Sue Klassen

We neither own a TV nor have war toys in our home. Our son, Nathan, did not even know what a gun was until he was 3 years old. As soon as he learned, everything became a gun—sticks in the woods, blocks, fingers, even bananas.

Seasoned parents warned me not to overreact. I could not take away his fingers, and taking away sticks and bananas would only drive his behavior underground. I overcame my initial alarm, and looked at banana guns as opportunities for discussion.

Over the years, bands of friends have roamed our woods and played in our family room. Through endless discussions we have worked out guidelines: Don't shoot at people, unless your weapon only stuns or temporarily paralyzes them. It's OK to shoot pretend animals for enough food for your family, but it's also good to express regret to the animals, as Native Americans have modeled.

As our children have grown—Nathan is now 12, and we have an 8-year-old daughter, Sylvia—we have had deeper discussions ranging from capital punishment to conflict resolution skills and transformative justice. Our children are against war, and they speak up for merciful justice that brings healing. I thought our banana gun days were behind us. How wrong I was.

One day, Sylvia was playing with Legos in our dining room, a common activity. I came in and commented on her new Lego house.

"It's a hospital," she said.

"Do you want to tell me about it?" I asked.

"No, not right now."

However, she did want to tell me about her current activity: disassembling Lego people into parts. I saw piles of hands, neat rows of Lego torsos and legs on Lego tables, and a tall stacks of Lego heads on the hospital floor. Lego people stood in front of the tables.

"The workers are taking apart the people, so they can use the parts," she said.

I am all for recycling, and I want any usable parts from my body to be used to help others when I die. This sounded good.

"Here's the jail." Sylvia held up a small K'NEX (a toy brand) structure with a Lego person inside. "It crushes criminals."

Sylvia demonstrated how the top slid down. "Nathan made the jail for criminals, and I noticed how it can compact them." She demonstrated again, pleased with her discovery.

"It doesn't kill them. It just crushes them. They're dissected alive," she continued.

I felt myself recoil in horror. Monster children, I screamed inside myself. How could they pretend this? This was worse than Nazi death camps.

I sat, unwilling to react until I had time to think. I wanted to blast Sylvia with fire from my tongue, to burn this atrocity away. But another voice inside said to listen, to not cut off communication with judgment.

Usually their play was benign and happy. With other friends, Nathan and Sylvia had an imaginary town called Beanville, which filled the basement. They had celebrations, plantings, harvests, auctions, horse roundups. Why this dark side of play?

I blamed myself. They're too young to hear the Old Testament. We'd been reading our way through the Bible—we were up to 2 Kings. It's too violent for young minds, I thought.

I continued to sit. Sylvia continued to dismember people.

I reasoned with myself. I recognized that it's appealing to disassemble Lego people. Lego heads just ask to be stacked. And how can a child not try out a new feature she discovers? If the toy jail can change its shape, it begs her to crush criminals. I recognized, too, that children must deal with issues of good and evil. They need to feel powerful over evil.

But still, this play was the antithesis of

I continued to sit. Sylvia continued to dismember people.

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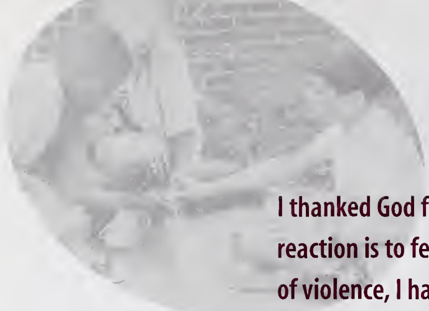
Marilyn Nolt—for illustration only



I thanked God for the grace to come to this point in our conversation. My first reaction is to feel furious when I see violence. I want to stamp it out. But hatred of violence, I have learned, leads me to respond violently to my children.

Banana guns
continued from page 5

everything we stood for, taught and tried to live. I had to respond. I knew getting children to think was more powerful than punishment or new rules. I formulated a question.

"Do your Lego people have feelings?"

"Yes," Sylvia said. "The criminals killed many people. They deserve to suffer."

Nathan joined the conversation. "The criminals designed the compacting device, so it should be used on them."

I expected these attitudes in general society. But I serve on the New York Conference executive committee in the position of special concern for peace and justice. Kathleen Kern, a longtime member of Christian Peacemaker Teams, lives with our family. My children help me write letters for CPT's Campaign for Secure Dwellings and help me send mailings on behalf of the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund. They have shown excitement about the new local restorative justice program starting in Rochester, N.Y. How could this be happening in our family?

"Train up children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray" (Proverbs 22:6) runs through my mind. This is the training time. The verse does not suggest we will see consistent results when they are young. My job, as Deuteronomy 6 outlines, is to talk with my children when we sit and rise, when we come and go, at the dinner table and during Lego play.

I instructed myself: Listen and observe, hear my children first, wonder. I can do this better when I visualize them as healthy, seeking, creative children who are growing into the people God designed them to be. I took a moment to visualize, then thanked God for these children and this moment.

I directed a question to Sylvia about her main Beanville character, Dorothy. Sylvia's middle name is Dorothy, and she made this character a personification of herself. "How would you feel if Dorothy were wrongly accused, then tortured and dismembered?"

Nathan and Sylvia were quick to explain. "It's only done to people who are seen doing the crime."

They told about the Beanville character George, who was wrongly accused and in jail many times. It was another George who had committed the crimes. This could not happen in their jail, they assured me.

I approach the topic from another angle. "You know I am against capital punishment," I began, then listed reasons they had heard before. "But I am thankful for the emphasis on humane methods," I added.

Nathan recalled the practice of drawing and quartering from the Middle Ages. We all shuddered, imagining. I reminded them of the Jewish laws detailing methods for the humane killing of animals.

Finally, I shared my thoughts about the crushing and dissection of live Lego criminals.

Restorative justice, transformative justice

Being tough on crime is popular with today's politicians. Harsher sentences keep criminals off the street for longer. But there is little evidence that increasing punishment reduces crime. Our jails are over-full, the tax burden is heavy and offenders are likely to offend again when released. We need a better way.

Restorative justice provides an alternative. "Victims, offenders and community members come together to decide how to address the harm caused by crime," says Lorraine Stutzman-Amstutz, director of Mennonite Central Committee's Office on Crime and Justice.

Restorative justice brings dignity to the victim. The victim can ask the offender questions, such as, Why me? or, How can I be sure this won't happen again? Victims can express their feelings and needs and participate in decisions about an appropriate sentence. Victims feel empowered.

Offenders learn to take responsibility through restorative justice. They must admit to the crime before the restorative justice process can begin, and they must be willing to take responsibility for the consequences of their action. Research indicates that offenders who serve their time in jail are more likely to reoffend than those who participate in restorative justice programs.

Community members participate in bringing just resolutions to the community as they help determine the sentence of the offender. They also look for creative ways to reintegrate the offender into the community in productive, life-giving ways.

Restorative justice programs are being started in many communities as the positive results around the continent convince police and court systems of their efficacy.

Ruth Morris, a Quaker activist and international speaker and writer on penal abolition, feels that restorative justice, though good, does not go far enough. She is a strong advocate of transformative justice.

"Transformative justice takes crime as an opportunity to use the pain to bring transformative healing into the lives of victims, offenders, their families and the wider affected community," Ruth says. "Transformative justice includes the overwhelming reality of structural injustice in its analysis, including the systemic racism and classism of our justice system."—*Sue Klassen*

"Criminals are people, too, and are often the victims of great injustice themselves. I ache when I see someone tortured like this."

My children continued to play, giving no visible response. Farmers do not see results for days, even weeks, when they plant seeds, I reminded myself. Only some seeds germinate. My job was to prepare the soil and plant the seeds. The rest was beyond my control.

I thanked God for the grace to come to this point in our conversation. My first reaction is to feel furious when I see violence. I want to stamp it out. But hatred of violence, I have learned, leads me to respond violently to my children.

Walter Wink's book *Engaging the Powers* (Fortress, 1992), especially Chapter 10, "On Not Becoming What We Hate," has helped me understand how normal this is, and has helped me find a better way. I recommend it to all parents and other human beings.

Wink cites Jung's psychological law "We become what we hate," and gives many examples, from interpersonal to international, of our tendency to mimic the very thing we fight against. Neither fighting against violence nor running away from it is helpful. Wink talks about Christ's third way—nonviolent direct action. When I keep my eyes on Christ and meditate on his creative responses to violence, I can find that third way.

I am glad for our discussion. I had a look into the world and thoughts of my children, and they had a look into mine. I avoided condemnation, punishment and new rules. While these have their place, I felt we touched a deeper place, a place that made condemnation, punishment and new rules seem superficial, unnecessary.

I rose to leave. Sylvia was helping her Lego hospital workers rebuild people.

"They use brains from the mind factory to assemble new people," she explained. She set another restored Lego person outside the hospital. "They have new minds so they don't have the minds of criminals."

That sounds like an 8-year-old's attempt at transformative justice to me.

I have never seen their toy jail used again. It fell by the wayside. I no longer think our banana gun days are over, but I look forward with confidence. Now I thank God for the opportunity for growth that comes with every banana gun and K'NEX jail.

Sue Klassen lives in Webster, N.Y.

MENNOS AT WORK

Anna Mast Bishop, Harrisonburg, Va.

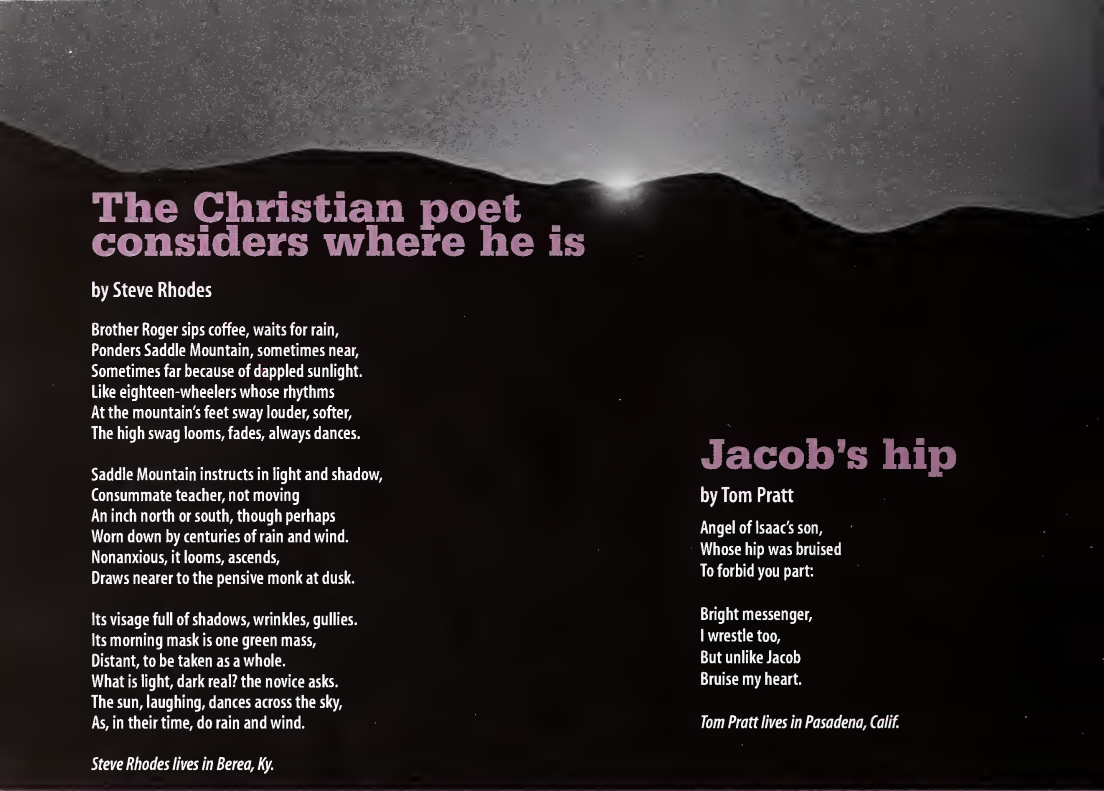
Congregation: Community Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg, Va.

Occupation: public school teacher

Years in occupation: 17

Why I do what I do: In our school system, kindergarten is all day, five days per week. Living with 20-plus 5-year-olds day in and day out can be exhausting. It takes an abundance of energy, patience and planning to keep a step ahead of them. However, I find it fulfilling. In what other job would I be so adored and greeted with hugs and fistfuls of dandelions at the start of a day? Five-year-olds are still innocent and unspoiled. They come to me curious, spontaneous and eager to learn. I strive to keep that joy and curiosity a part of our classroom atmosphere. One of the challenges for teachers of young children today is that even the youngest learners are being pressured to learn more and more academic material. I teach many skills in kindergarten that I taught in first grade 30 years ago. In spite of these pressures, I try my best to preserve their childhood, allow them to laugh and play. I work hard to make the curriculum meaningful and fun. As I teach, nurture and love these young learners from August to June, I am amazed at the tremendous growth each child makes—socially, emotionally and academically.

The role of faith in what I do: I am called by God to be a Christian teacher in the public school. I care for the unique worth of each child in my class. I attempt to get to know each child personally by making home visits, showing interest in their personal lives and working cooperatively with parents. I believe in the ethic of caring in the classroom and endeavor to foster caring and empathy among my students. I teach children to talk out their conflicts and use peaceful problem-solving techniques instead of the aggression and hitting many of them are used to. As a Christian teacher, I try to treat each child with dignity and respect, never belittling or demeaning anyone. The public school is a mission field for me as I take the love and light of Jesus with me and touch the lives of needy children, parents and colleagues. As long as there are Christian teachers in the public schools, God and prayer are there, too.



Rohn Engh

The Christian poet considers where he is

by Steve Rhodes

Brother Roger sips coffee, waits for rain,
Ponders Saddle Mountain, sometimes near,
Sometimes far because of dappled sunlight.
Like eighteen-wheelers whose rhythms
At the mountain's feet sway louder, softer,
The high swag looms, fades, always dances.

Saddle Mountain instructs in light and shadow,
Consummate teacher, not moving
An inch north or south, though perhaps
Worn down by centuries of rain and wind.
Nonanxious, it looms, ascends,
Draws nearer to the pensive monk at dusk.

Its visage full of shadows, wrinkles, gullies.
Its morning mask is one green mass,
Distant, to be taken as a whole.
What is light, dark real? the novice asks.
The sun, laughing, dances across the sky,
As, in their time, do rain and wind.

Steve Rhodes lives in Berea, Ky.

Jacob's hip

by Tom Pratt

Angel of Isaac's son,
Whose hip was bruised
To forbid you part:

Bright messenger,
I wrestle too,
But unlike Jacob
Bruise my heart.

Tom Pratt lives in Pasadena, Calif.

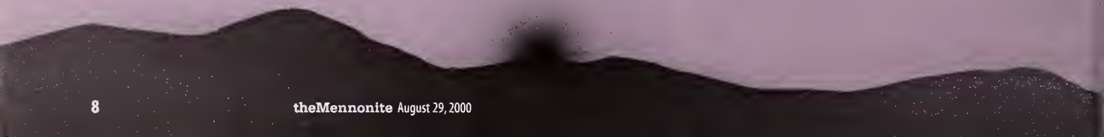
Coping with the news

by Jeanne A. Lohmann

Because we must, we fall toward form. The heart's
sure rhythms drum our blood within a slatted box
of bone. This world's perverse, unseemly cruel,
and overflows. The limits of a song contain,
a little while they teach the pulse. Mind is
the raging, slippery one. It plays with words
and thinks to understand. When idiot violence
is alive and well, why, reason should explain.

But grieving, numb, we're pulled toward form
that holds us firm, to rituals for our days,
to love's dear symbols, poetry. To silence then,
where acts and songs begin. We learn to leave
the hurt we cannot help, beyond belief to trust
the shaping truth we sense, and cannot truly say.

Jeanne A. Lohmann lives in Olympia, Wash.



First orientation educates educators

Event draws new professors from U.S., Canadian schools

HESSTON, Kan.—Before they started a new school year, some three dozen new Mennonite college and seminary faculty members received an education. They gathered Aug. 18-19 on the Hesston College campus to address the particulars and peculiarities of teaching in an Anabaptist religious and cultural context.

That's why Ruth Rempel attended. After her doctorate studies at the University of Toronto, she is preparing for her first year as an international development and history professor at Menno Simons College in Winnipeg.

"A small church college … is a different environment," she says. "I'm expecting a different ethos, and I need to know how to teach there."

Other participants needed a crash course on Mennonite history, institutions, culture, even geography. "When I got to EMU, people kept talking about Goshen, which was a place in Egypt you weren't supposed to go back to," said Manny Jose, a non-Mennonite and second-year finance professor at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

But the bottom line was to impress upon the new professors the importance of teaching at a Mennonite school. "Here we're looking to strengthen church-related colleges," said planning committee member Dan Hess, a retired Goshen (Ind.) College professor.

The two-day new faculty orientation was a first for all Mennonite Church Canada- and Mennonite Church USA-affiliated colleges and seminaries. The only school not represented at the weekend event was Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C. In addition to worship and recreation, sessions focused on a broad spectrum of topics related to teaching in a Mennonite setting, including an overview of the church, student profiles, distinctives of Anabaptist education and effective pedagogy. While the orientation was for instructors in their first several years at Mennonite schools, the session leaders were veteran professors.

In his presentation on "Toward an Anabaptist/Mennonite Philosophy of Education," Harry Huebner stated that teaching is one of the callings of the church. "To teach as church is to view the college as putting forth the church's best argument" in all areas of life, said Huebner, a dean at Canadian Mennonite University, a new venture composed of three Winnipeg Mennonite schools.

"The truth is particular in Jesus Christ," he said. "As Christian educators, it behooves us to teach all things from this conviction."

One important way to do that is through the curriculum. J. Denny Weaver, religion professor at Bluffton (Ohio) College, argued that a nonviolence perspective should be incorporated into all discplines and not just relegated to peace or theological studies.

"Nonviolence is a comprehensive worldview … that has the potential to shape the entire curriculum," he said.

While many of the presentations highlighted such Anabaptist distinctives, Tom Yoder Neufeld reported that educationally, Mennonites are of the world as well as in it. A religion and peace professor at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont., Neufeld pointed out that Mennonite schools are subject to the same "powers and principalities" as other schools, such as tenure, funding, accreditation and relations with administration.

"We don't have any report cards on whether [students] caught the [Christian/Mennonite] vision. … Tenure isn't based on if you believe Christ and follow him sacrificially," he said. "But that shouldn't stop you and me from making that the chief goal in life."

To encourage faculty members, Huebner suggested the creation of a Mennonite professors' guild. "We're not going to learn [such issues] from our professional associations," he said.

Orientation participants were also encouraged to later gather at their own schools to continue addressing questions and concerns of new faculty members.

Orientation organizers and participants hope that future orientations can be regularly held in future years—maybe even for continuing professors as well as for new ones.

Hess said Mennonite higher education is in crisis as fewer than 30 percent of Mennonite students attend Mennonite colleges, compared to 50 percent less than two decades ago.

"More than any other church agency, the colleges have produced our leaders," he said. "We want the faculty members to understand how important it is."—*Rich Preheim*

Taking attendance

The first orientation for new faculty at Mennonite colleges and seminaries drew participants and/or presenters from every Mennonite Church Canada- and Mennonite Church USA-affiliated school except for Columbia Bible College in Abbotsford, B.C.

Represented at the orientation, held Aug. 18-19 at Hesston (Kan.) College, were

- Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.
- Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.
- Bluffton (Ohio) College
- Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnpeg
- Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ont.
- Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.
- Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.
- Goshen (Ind.) College
- Hesston (Kan.) College
- Menno Simons College, Winnipeg

Paraguay poses multicultural issues

Workers try to bridge German and Latino cultures

ASUNCIÓN, Paraguay—Like many minority urban populations in North America, German ethnic Mennonites in Paraguay's capital city share a common language, history and cultural tradition.

Those are ties that strengthen the faith community but also make relating to people outside that community a challenging part of ministry for C. Paul and Hildi Amstutz, mission workers for Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

German-speaking Mennonites first arrived in Paraguay in the 1920s when refugees arrived to escape persecution in the Soviet Union and immigrants left Canada in search of greater religious freedom.

It takes intentionality to move beyond the familiar and comfortable, be that geographically, emotionally or culturally.

—Hildi Amstutz

While most everyone in the German Mennonite congregations knows Spanish, there is still a strong pull to preserve their heritage, the Amstutzes say. The tendency has been for German speakers to send missionaries to work among Latino and indigenous people while remaining in Germanic enclaves themselves.

"People naturally gravitate toward [people] they know," says C. Paul.

By inviting Spanish speakers to their congregation, one of two German-speaking Mennonite congregations in Asunción, it is becoming more open to local involvement with Latinos, the Amstutzes say. But this is still threatening for some.

Hildi would like to see churches in both Paraguay and North America "cross-pollinate" across ethnic boundaries. "Our human tendency is to stay in our comfort zones," she says. "It takes intentionality to move beyond the familiar and comfortable, be that geographically, emotionally or culturally."

C. Paul is inspired to continue reaching out when he sees new people come to faith who don't have generations of Sunday-school background. He says that is a joyous experience that church members can easily lose sight of.

Left to right: Miriam, Daniel, Hildi and C. Paul Amstutz

C. Paul is active in an Asunción business chaplaincy program, where a staff of four chaplains serves more than 600 employees of 12 Mennonite-owned firms. His work includes leading six of the 20 employee Bible study groups, planning weekly devotions and chapel services, and organizing Christian literature for lending. He also counsels workers in difficult times and visits those showing openness to the gospel.

C. Paul says he finds some of the workers suspicious of the Mennonite chaplains' motives, since 90 percent of the Paraguayan population considers itself Catholic and already Christian. He tries to encourage open dialogue, believing that authenticity and confidentiality best demonstrate that he is not a spy for the owners.

Hildi is the coordinator of the 30 small groups at their congregation. She works with leadership development and Bible study and encourages evangelism through friendships, hoping that cultural and spiritual openness will help members make room for new people.

Hildi is also involved with the congregation's caring team for church discipline and counseling issues, a women's prayer group and the church board. She said the congregation also tries to reach out to young adults from the German-Mennonite colonies who are moving to Asunción. The youth are often looking for anonymity rather than a Christian commitment, she says.

Together the Amstutzes lead a Spanish-language small group, and C. Paul translates worship services from German to Spanish.

C. Paul, a Kansas native, and Hildi, a native Paraguayan, have served in Paraguay since 1992. Their daughter, Miriam, will begin at Hesston (Kan.) College, this fall. Son Daniel attends a Paraguayan Mennonite high school that teaches in German and Spanish.—*Anne Horst of GCMC and MBM news services*

Mennonite mission efforts in Paraguay

The first Mennonites in Paraguay came in the 1920s from the Soviet Union and Canada. Through their outreach efforts as well as those of North Americans, the Paraguayan Mennonite population includes Spanish-speaking and indigenous groups. Mennonite World Conference statistics list 21 different groups in the country.

National interfaith survey finding high rates of congregational participation by adults, youth

CHICAGO—Nearly half of the congregations, mosques and synagogues participating in an interfaith survey—including Mennonite Church USA—report their numbers of participating adults has grown since 1995, according to a preliminary analysis of responses.

The still incomplete returns also indicate that youth participation is high. Fifty-five percent of responding congregations report that "most" or "almost all" high school-age children of adult members are involved in the religious life and activities of the congregation. Another 27 percent said that "some" of their members' children were involved.

Mennonite Church USA and more than 40 other U.S. Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Baha'i and other groups are conducting the survey, a coalition known as Faith Communities Today (FACT). The project will represent 95 percent of all worshipers in the United States.

An Aug. 7-9 meeting in Chicago marked a transition from data gathering to utilization as participants—researchers, educators and communication specialists—talked about ways local groups might be able to study themselves in light of the FACT findings.

"We want to help congregations build on their strengths and overcome any weaknesses," said FACT co-director Carl Dudley. "This will be the most powerful use of the data."

Said David Roozen, the other co-director: "The hard work is over; now our fun begins. Analysis of the extensive data will occupy scholars for months, even years."

Dudley and Roozen are faculty members of the Hartford (Conn.) Seminary.

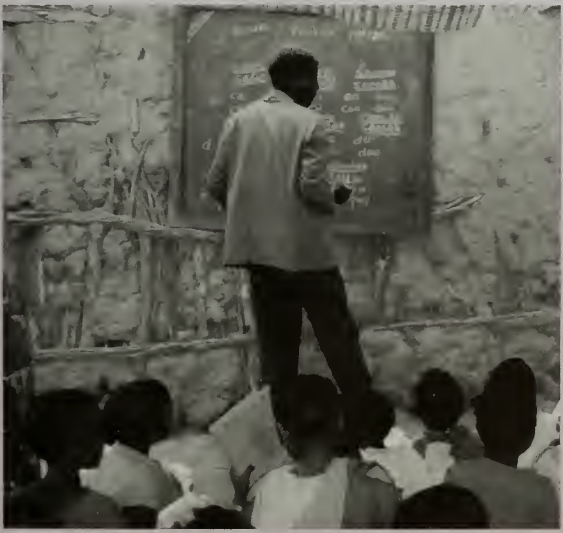
Each faith group was responsible for gathering its own data through statistically valid samples and will develop its own follow-up programs. The groups used nearly 190 questions from a common core questionnaire. Some groups, including Mennonite Church USA, added specialized questions.

Mennonite Church USA responses came from 282 congregations in the United States, including Puerto Rico. Data compilation was directed by Karen Klassen Harder, business and economics professor at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.

The survey, which has been in process for nearly five years, includes mainline, Pentecostal, Evangelical, independent and "megachurch" Protestants, as well as Roman Catholic and Orthodox Christians, Jews, Muslims, Mormons, Baha'i and others. Participants at the Chicago meeting repeatedly noted the warm and inclusive nature of the gathering.

The project has been funded in part by the Lilly Endowment of Indianapolis.—*Martin Bailey for GCMC News Service*

MCC photo



Back to school

A teacher puts a lesson on the board at a nonformal school in the rural Ethiopian area of Meta Robi, about 70 miles west of the capital of Addis Ababa. The Meserete Kristos Church, the Mennonite church in Ethiopia, will build 20 such schools in Meta Robi, where most children can't afford to attend a formal school. The nonformal schools, made from local materials, will offer education through grade four, using grade 12 graduates as teachers, rather than college- trained ones.

Colleges to study spiritual growth

Bluffton (Ohio) College is participating in an international research project investigating how traditional-age students grow spiritually during their college years.

In the first year of the project, called Faithful Change, a random sample of 20 first-year students at each of the seven participating schools are interviewed, along with 10 students. The original 20 will be interviewed again as sophomores, juniors and seniors. In the fourth year of the project, an additional 10 seniors will be randomly selected to be interviewed.

In addition to the interviews, students are examined through a number of written psychologial tests.

Faithful Change is sponsored by the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities. Other participating schools are Asbury College in Wilmore, Ky.; Azusa (Calif.) Pacific University; Eastern College, St. Davids, Pa.; Eastern Nazarene College, Quincy, Mass.; Greenville (Ill.) College; Taylor University, Upland, Ind.; and two South Korean schools, Hansei University and Korea Nazarene University.

MWC visitors offer support for Colombia

BOGOTÁ, Colombia—A delegation of Mennonite World Conference (MWC) representatives from four continents visited the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches in Colombia last month as an expression of solidarity and concern for their Anabaptist sisters and brothers in the violence-ridden nation.

The four-day visit came just before the Global Anabaptist Mission Consultation,. held July 12-23 in Guatemala City. The consultation was originally scheduled to be held in Colombia but was moved for security reasons.

The delegation was led by Hugo Moreira of Uruguay, a member of the MWC executive committee. Other members were Juan Ballesteros of Switzerland, Ambrocio Porcincula of the Philippines and Enock Shamapani of Zambia. They met with members of the three Anabaptist groups in the country: the Mennonite Church of Colombia, the Mennonite Brethren Church and the Brethren in Christ Church.

Moreira says he was inspired by the churches' growth despite rampant violence. "You have to go to Colombia to hear what's really going on in that country," he said.

The mission consultation also featured another example of support for a stricken Mennonite. On the second day of the consultation, participants were told that Dale Wolgemuth, an Eastern Mennonite Missions worker in Guatemala, had suffered a heart attack and had been brought to the city and needed blood. Six participants with the needed blood type went to the hospital to donate blood.

Wolgemuth was later flown back to the United States for medical care and is reported to be doing well.—*MWC News Service*

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Site chosen for Nashville junior high convention

ELKHART, Ind.—While the adults and youth will gather for next summer's churchwide conventions at the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center in Nashville, Tenn., junior high participants will have their activities about 25 miles east of the city.

Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tenn., has been chosen as the site for the junior high convention, which will run concurrently with the adult and youth conventions July 2-7, 2001. About 400 students in grades seven through nine are expected. Activities will include worship, recreation, stories and music, with the theme "Gettin' Together in Christ."

All convention participants will meet together on July 4 for Peace Celebration Day activities at the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center.

Former editor of *The Mennonite* dies at 87

BELLINGHAM, Wash.—Reynold Weinbrenner, editor of *The Mennonite* from 1941 to 1948, died Aug. 11 at a Bellingham nursing home. He was 87.

Prior to becoming editor, Weinbrenner pastored Mennonite congregations in Beatrice, Neb., and Upland, Calif., as well as a Congregational church in Los Angeles. After leaving *The Mennonite*, he taught English in several California schools. He moved to Bellingham in 1981.

Weinbrenner was a 1936 graduate of Bethel College in North Newton, Kan., and also attended Hartford (Conn.) Theological Seminary and the University of Southern California in Los Angeles.

Evangelical Mennonite Church keeps name

UPLAND, Ind.—Heritage prevailed over change in the Evangelical Mennonite Church as a vote to change the name failed by a narrow margin at the EMC annual convention Aug. 3-6 in Upland.

A proposal to change the denomination's name to Conference of Evangelical Churches received a 72 percent affirmative vote, short of the 75 percent necessary for passage.

EMC president Don Roth said the issue centers on cultural implications. "People have a stereotype that Mennonites are the same as Amish," he said. "Because of that, people we are trying to reach hold us at arm's length. They don't want to be Amish."

But James Bertsche, a longtime Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission worker and administrator and ordained EMC minister, opposed the name change. " 'Mennonite' implies an infusion of Reformation theology with a conviction that cannot dismiss the Semon on the Mount," he said.

The EMC, with headquarters in Fort Wayne, Ind., has 7,500 members.—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

MCC U.S. calls for moratorium on cluster bombs

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S. and a British partner, the United Kingdom (UK) Working Group on Landmines, are calling for a moratorium on the use of cluster bombs.

MCC U.S. on Aug. 7 released a report highlighting the suffering of innocent civilians from inaccurate targeting and unexploded ordnance. The report provides detailed information about the United States and Russian cluster bomb arsenals, their uses and the suffering they cause.

"Civilian deaths in Kosovo, Iraq and Chechnya bear tragic testimony to the inhumane nature of these weapons," the report says.

The report coincided with the release of a similiar report by the UK Working Group on Landmines.—*MCC News Service*

by the way ...

Chocolate king Milton S. Hershey made it a point to annually attend at least one worship service in the Reformed Mennonite Church, of which his mother had been a member. —*An Introduction to Old Order and Conservative Mennonite Groups* by Stephen Scott

FREEMAN JR. COLLEGE

Freeman Courier photo by Jeremy Waltner

Stand and sing

Even though the school has been gone since 1986, Freeman (S.D.) Junior College's music stands remain. Alumni of the college and related high school, shown here practicing, gathered in a mass choir in Freeman Aug. 3-6 to record a compact disc and give a concert as part of a yearlong celebration of the centennial of the school's founding. The college closed 14 years ago, but Freeman Academy still operates with grades five through 12.

Corrections: In the Aug. 22 Readers Say, Robert J. Zani's letter should have included a reference to Luke 23:34, not Luke 23:24 as printed.

Jené Yoder is serving with Mennonite Voluntary Service in Topeka, Kan. Her name was misspelled in the Aug. 15 issue.

Workers

Martin, Sonya, Baltimore, has begun as Prayer Ministries assistant for Discipleship Ministries at Eastern Mennonite Missions, Salunga, Pa.

Parks, Lynn S., was licensed June 18 as associate pastor at Oxford Circle Mennonite Church, Philadelphia.

Penner, Vicki, began Aug. 15 as pastor at Peace Mennonite Church, Lawrence, Kan.

Schlabach, Abner and Virginia Glass, Perkasie, Pa., have completed a three-year term with Mennonite Board of Missions as hosts of the London Mennonite Centre.

Births

Charles, William Frederick, Aug. 6, to Melinda (Kline) and William Charles, Lancaster, Pa.

Friesen, Savannah Emily, July 24, to Elise (Garber) and Jeremy Friesen, Goshen, Ind.

Hunsberger, Colin Richard, Aug. 2, to Charlotte (Gascho) and Steven Hunsberger, Telford, Pa.

Kennell, Zachary Lee, June 16, to Brian and Lori (Voth) Kennell, Newton, Kan.

Kurtz, Hannah Marie, Aug. 8, to Eric and Kim (Bontrager) Kurtz, Philadelphia.

Liechty, Rebekeha Grace, July 28, to Chris and Holly Liechty, Archbold, Ohio.

Renick, Sydney Nicole, July 19, to Eric and Kamala (Geiser) Renick, Cincinnati.

Ressler, Joshua Caleb, July 18, to Josephine (Angelo) and Ronald Ressler, North Lawrence, Ohio.

Richmann, James Dale, July 17, to Jeanette (Osborn) and Philip Richmann, Canton, Ohio.

Roth, Ashley Lyn, July 17, to Fred and Tamara (Benson) Roth, Dorchester, Neb.

Strubhar, Magdalyn Grace, Aug. 5, to Andrew and Lisa (Gundy) Strubhar, Washington, Ill.

Thompson, Carlie Michelle, Aug. 4, to Connie (Miller) and Jeff Thompson, Kent, Ohio.

Walt, Miranda Raquel, Aug. 14, to Darren and Nancy Walt, Harleysville, Pa.

Wilch, Lauren Elizabeth, July 15, to Beth (Stettler) and Jonathan Wilch, Columbus, Ohio.

Wyse, Danielle Casey, Aug. 4, to Con and Kathy Wyse, Archbold, Ohio.

Young, Samuel Louis, Aug. 14, to Diane (Hafner) and Todd Young, East Peoria, Ill.

Marriages

Bezio/Voss: Jessica Bezio, Watertown, N.Y., and Shane Voss, Watertown, July 29 at Watertown Mennonite Church.

Britton/Noftsier: Deborah Britton, Lyons Falls, N.Y., and Romeyn Noftsier, Lyons Falls, July 22 at Port Leyden, N.Y.

Burgeson/Hofer: Michael Burgeson, Yankton, S.D., and Stephanie Hofer, Bridgewater, S.D., July 29 at Hutterthal Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Chansler/Peters: Kelly Chansler, San Diego, and Eric Peters, Hesston, Kan., July 29 at Estes Park, Colo.

Cofer/Wiens: Don Cofer, Hutchinson, Kan., and Becky Wiens, Buhler, Kan., June 17 at Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Dane/Huebert: Matthew Dane, Henderson, Neb., and Lana Huebert, Henderson, Aug. 5 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Dowden/Hofer: Jessica Dowden, Freeman, S.D., and Chad Hofer, Freeman, June 17 at Salem Mennonite Brethren Church, Bridgewater, S.D.

Dueck/Stoltzfus: Tim Dueck, York, Pa., and Katie Stoltzfus, Lancaster, Pa., Aug. 5 at Chapel of the Sermon on the Mount, Elkhart, Ind.

Edwards/Householter: Larry Edwards, El Paso, Ill., and Inez Householter, Eureka, Ill., Aug. 5 at Eureka (Ill.) Christian Church.

Gross/Worthen: Katie Gross, Goodfield, Ill., and Ryan Worthen, Morton, Ill., Aug. 5 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka, Ill.

Henline/Stamm: Chad Henline, Adrian, Mich., and Shanan Stamm, Stryker, Ohio, July 22 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker.

Koehn/Kugasaki: Timothy Koehn, Greeley, Colo., and Krysten Kugasaki, Greeley, July 30 at Greeley.

Litwiller/Miller: Aimee Litwiller, Washington, Iowa, and Brian Miller, Kalona, Iowa, June 24 at Washington.

Maslauskas/Siegrist: Becky Maslauskas, Hagerstown, Md., and Brian Siegrist, Richville, N.Y., Aug. 12 at Zion United Church of Christ, Hagerstown.

Mounsithiraj/Stuckey: Thavisak Mounsithiraj, Goshen, Ind., and Anita Stuckey, Goshen, July 29 at Goshen (Ind.) College.

Noftsier/Wolff: Nancy Noftsier, Castorland, N.Y., and Gary Wolff, Croghan, N.Y., Aug. 12 at First Mennonite Church of New Bremen, Lowville, N.Y.

Nuenschwander/Ramer: Rod Nuenschwander, Dalton, Ohio, and Susan Ramer, North Lawrence, Ohio, July 29 at Sonnenburg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Deaths

Miller, Martha, 83, Hesston, Kan., died July 7. Spouse: Herbert Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Mary Kaufman. Funeral: July 15 at Newton, Kan.

Mininger, Charles, 94, Souderton, Pa., died July 29. Spouse: Eva Nice Mininger (deceased). Parents: Henry and Katie Brunner Mininger (deceased). Survivors: children Lois Donaldson, Earl, Charles; seven grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 4 at Souderton.

Schmidt, Lydia Harms, 98, Elbing, Kan., died July 15. Spouse: Emil Schmidt (deceased). Other survivors: son Loren; two grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 18 at Grace Hill Mennonite Church, Whitewater, Kan.

Sprinkle, Ruth, 83, Scottdale, Pa., died Aug. 2 from injuries from a fall. Spouse: Jesse Sprinkle. Parents: Mahlon (stepfather) and Mary Dillon (deceased). Other survivors: children James, Nancy Keyser, Jerry, Rodney; nine grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 6 at Kingview Mennonite Church, Scottdale.

Whitewolf, Carol Ann Walksalong, 72, Sheridan, Wyo., died Aug. 2. Spouse: Fred Whitewolf. Parents: Hugh and Mamie Limberhand Walksalong (deceased). Other survivors: three sons, two daughters; 16 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 7 at Lame Deer (Mont.) Mennonite Church.

classifieds

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** is seeking a teaching applicant for ***middle school language arts/coordinator*** to begin in mid-autumn. Interested people should contact Kay Predmore, 1050 E. Newport Road, Lititz, PA 17543; 717-626-9551.

- **25th anniversary celebration** of the ***St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship***, Sunday, Nov. 12; gathering at 9 a.m., worship at 10, meal at noon. All are invited to come celebrate 25 years of growth and ministry in St. Louis.

  For lodging or information, contact Sheila Yoder-Baer, 636-584-0231; email <yoderbaer@juno.com>.

- **Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship**, a worshiping congregation of approximately 170 in Goshen, Ind., seeks an ***additional pastor*** to serve on their leadership team. This person will have primary responsibility for the preaching and teaching ministry as well as vision and mission planning.

  Written inquiries, resumes and Ministerial Leadership Information forms should be sent to Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, c/o Search Committee, 2509 Berkey Ave., Goshen, IN 46526. Contacts should be made on or before Sept. 10, 2000.

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Discounted fees for all Mennonite related nonprofit programs

by Rich Preheim

The price of justice

The Anglican Church of Canada wanted to do the right thing. And that could bankrupt the church within the year, says *ChristianWeek.*

The church, with only $10 million in assets, is facing $2 billion in 1,600 lawsuit claims stemming from abuse of students at residential schools for First Nations people (Native Canadians) run by the denomination and the Canadian government. The Anglican Church of Canada has admitted its culpability.

Most of the 26 Anglican-affiliated schools were operated by the national synod, which therefore is bearing the brunt of the financial burden. But two schools were run by dioceses, which are also now facing bankruptcy.

While Anglicans may be facing the worst of the fallout, they are not alone. The Presbyterian Church in Canada and United Church of Canada have also acknowledged their roles in similar lawsuits against them. An estimated 7,000 survivors of First Nations residential schools, which were run by the churches, have brought such suits.

"You have publicly admitted and apologized for your part in this tragedy," wrote Konrad Raiser, general secretary of the World Council of Churches, to the three denominations. "You have taken a lead in supporting the First Nations claims for justice."

The Spirit moves in quizzical ways

You never know where you will experience a spiritual moment. To Mike Menz, it happened on ABC's *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?*

So there was Menz, a Lutheran from Greeneville, Tenn., on stage with Regis Philbin, correctly answering questions for money. He was doing fine until he got to the more difficult questions with the bigger payoffs. But Menz didn't panic. "I just had this feeling that I was in God's hand and that it would be OK to take a chance," Menz tells *The Lutheran.*

His faith apparently paid off. While Menz didn't become a millionaire, he did become half of one, winning $500,000. He gave $50,000 to his congregation for a 25-passenger minibus.

"Ten years ago, I would have thought, 'I did it all on my own,' " Menz says. "But the older I get the more I realize we depend on other people and God to accomplish things."

Christianity and still another crisis

As if there isn't enough turmoil in the Holy Land, *Christian Century* reports this conflict: The Russian government is pressing the Palestinian National Authority to turn over control of a school in Bethany and a monastery in Hebron to the Moscow Patriarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church. The properties now belong to the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, which was formed in 1920, following the Communist Revolution, and has its headquarters in New York.

Sister Maria Stephanopoulus (sister of former President Clinton adviser George Stephanopoulus) has been leading the fight against the transfer of ownership. She says she fears the Moscow Patriarchate is only interested in the properties and not their mission.

Don't have a drink on them

A decision to serve alcohol at a Quaker-affiliated institution has church members popping their tops. Connor Prairie, near Indianapolis, is a living museum, complete with restaurants and catered events which can now serve drinks to patrons. Conner Prairie is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Earlham College, a Quaker school in Richmond, Ind.

"We believe that the Quaker testimony of abstinence is still an appropriate and timely model of upright, responsible and moral behavior sorely lacking and much needed in society at large," the Friends' Western Yearly Meeting wrote Earlham president Douglas Bennett.

Bennett says he presented the museum's board with the Quaker view of alcohol, according to *Quaker Life.* Nevertheless, the board applied for and received the liquor license.

Public opinion and religious freedom

If numbers don't lie, here are a few to be believed from a recent survey on the First Amendment, courtesy of *Sightings:*

- Only 16 percent of respondents could name freedom of religion as a specific right found in the First Amendment. In contrast, 60 percent could name freedom of speech.
- Sixty-one percent wants to allow schools the right to post the Ten Commandments.
- Sixty-three percent believes public school officials should be allowed to lead prayer in schools.
- Sixty-four percent is in favor of government vouchers that would allow parents to send children to schools of their choosing, including religious schools.
- Eighty-one percent thinks prayer is acceptable at a high school commencement ceremony if the majority of the graduating class favors it.

Tidbits

- Since 1965, the Southern Baptist Convention has sponsored more than 31,000 refugees to the United States and started more than 700 congregations among refugee populations.—*Monday*
- Five million of the 6 million Muslims in the United States are immigrants. —*Context*
- In 1830, there were 605 religious journals published in the United States, compared with only 14 journals 40 years earlier.—*Saints Herald*
- Chinese Christians recently held their first-ever church accordion workshop. —*Amity News Service*

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Rich Preheim

The God of overshoes and concrete

Jacob brought overshoes on the youth service trip. No one is sure why, since he and the other 20 people in the group were scheduled to spend the bulk of their week scraping and painting. Overshoes aren't necessary for such a project unless a flood of turpentine is expected.

But in the end, the story of Jacob's overshoes showed how he and the rest of the group found themselves surrounded by and testifying to the wonderful, mysterious ways of the Spirit.

Last month, the youth group traveled from Kansas to Colorado as participants in Group Venture, a short-term youth service program of the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Board of Missions. The group had been told that they would be painting houses.

But that changed shortly after arrival. Sister Josie from the local social service agency coordinating the assignment said she had been waiting for someone like them to tackle an overdue concrete project at the house of a woman with physical disabilities.

Never mind that no one told the group members that before they departed for Colorado. Never mind that there were no tools or plans. Never mind that the site was half an hour away from the original project. And certainly never mind that only two of the 16 kids and two of the five accompanying adults had any experience with concrete other than walking on it.

Like mangers, oil jars and fig trees, a pair of overshoes can be evidence of the divine. Like prostitutes, tax collectors and fishermen, a teenager pouring concrete for the first time can be a vessel of the Master Builder.

Sister Josie called. And so the group responded, reluctantly agreeing to the project.

If they knew what they were getting into, they probably wouldn't have touched it with a 20-foot trowel. The project was supposed to be a sidewalk. It turned out to be about 40 feet of sidewalk, a patio and three door stoops. While some group members went to do the painting, the rest started digging in, literally, tearing up the lawn to make room for the patio and sidewalk forms. By the time they started, the group had less than three days to work. All they probably could hope for was to get the forms ready for another group to lay the concrete.

With one of the sponsors as foreman and the kids eager to learn, they poured themselves into the project. Like Christ feeding the crowd with only fives loaves and two fish, their limited skills and meager experience were multiplied. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, the crew finished the job in a little more than two days.

It had to be the Holy Spirit. Maybe other aspects of the job can be humanly explained away. Perhaps it was the high altitude that caused the concrete to rapidly form. Perhaps it was the expertise of the driver that allowed him to maneuver his truck through an impossibly tight space into the backyard, thereby sparing the crew from having to haul all the concrete to the site in wheelbarrows.

But what else other than the moving of the Spirit explains Jacob's overshoes? While he did not know it at the time, he brought them for a reason. With his feet safely sheathed in rubber, Jacob was able to stand in the middle of the pond of slush that was to be the patio, directing and spreading concrete over the eight-foot-square area.

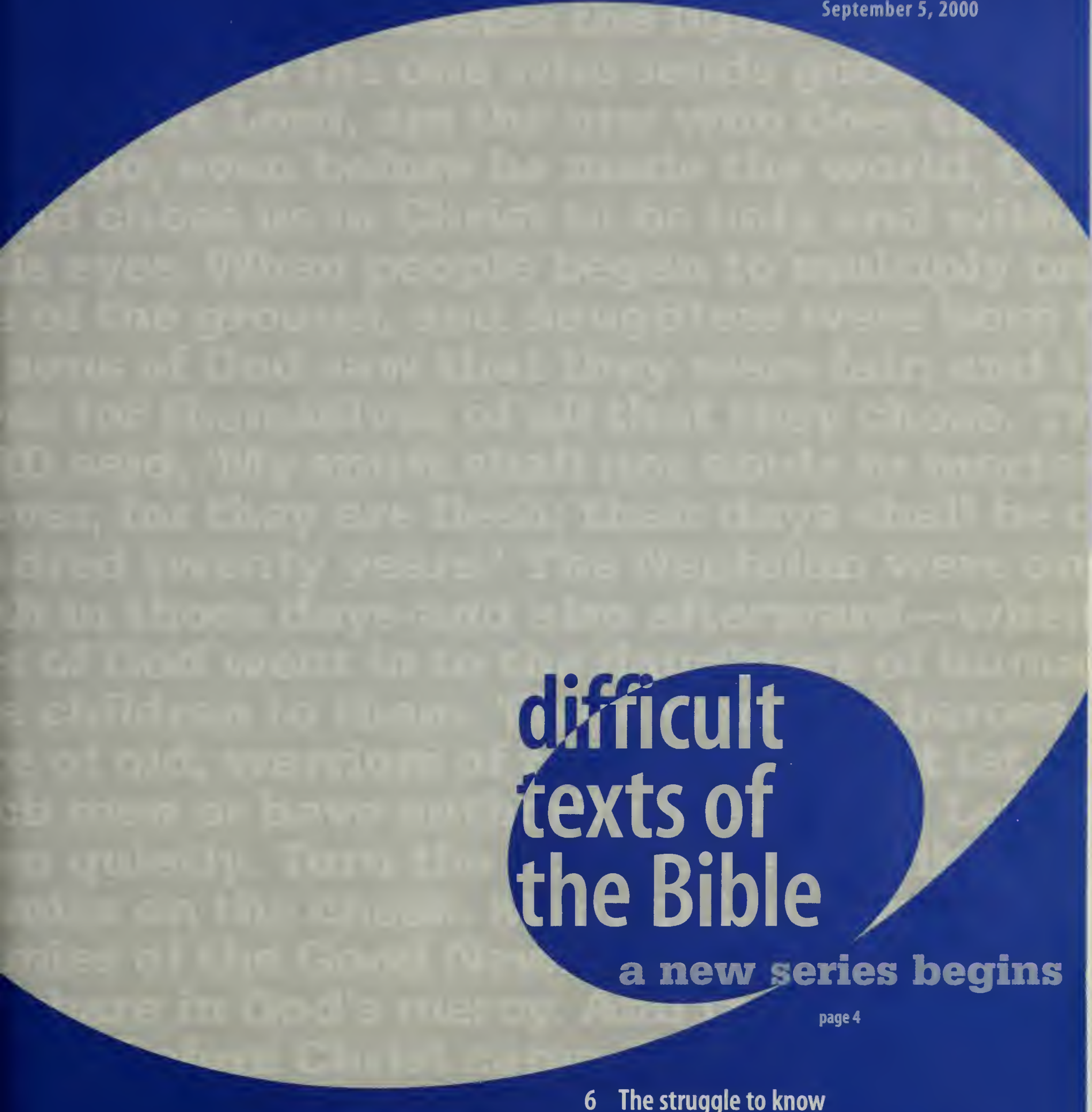
It may not have been a professional job, but that's not the point. The youth group members served a woman needing home improvements. But just as importantly, by successfully completing an unrealistic job, the group also pointed to the One in whom all things are possible.

Such stories testify to a God who revels in the ordinary, the commonplace, the mundane, the overlooked. Certainly overshoes could have been purchased in a local store, and the woman still would have received her home improvements. But it would not have glorified God—at least not in the same way. We would have missed this reminder of God's love, grace and power permeating and sustaining our lives.

Like mangers, oil jars and fig trees, a pair of overshoes can be evidence of the divine. Like prostitutes, tax collectors and fishermen, a teenager pouring concrete for the first time can be a vessel of the Master Builder. That's the way God works.

All glory, praise and honor to the God of overshoes and concrete.—*rp*

the Mennonite
September 5, 2000



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a new series begins

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

What's the alternative?

Edgar Stevanus' letter (Readers Say, Aug. 15) speaks of two issues. One is the responsibility of the state. Romans 13 tells us the state has its responsibilities. It must do what is best for its complete population. Not always will the state's decisions be according to Christian standards. I think it is wrong for Christians to impose Christian values onto non-Christians. We need to be examples of righteousness to them.

The second point is how Christians should act. The New Testament was written to Christians as instruction for them. Christians are to love, to not kill, to share with others, to show non-Christians the way to Jesus Christ.

If the whole nation were born-again Christians, then what Stevanus says is true. But let's be realistic—the North American nations are not Christian, and the governments must do what is best for the masses.

If capital punishment is so wrong, what should be done to stop the crime in our nations? I do not hear the proponents of doing away with capital punishment offering another solution to the crime problem in North American nations. It is one thing to say capital punishment is wrong but quite another to produce a workable solution to the governments as an alternative.

The prisons are full. Governments are expanding them. Governments are slow to move to the ultimate punishment, costing the taxpayer billions of dollars. Prisons don't rehabilitate criminals. For the victims of a merciless killer, justice is complete when the killer has experienced what he/she has done to their loved one.

Yes, I agree, it is wrong for Christians to kill. But if capital punishment is wrong, what is your alternative solution to crime?—*Homer Witmer, Dunnville, Ont.*

Impotent church

Many years ago, a minister spoke in our church and quoted from a book I believe was titled *Surveying the Ruins,* in which some of the social conditions that preceded the fall of the Roman Empire were listed. Two come to mind: (1) the rapid increase of divorce, and (2) the decay of religion, faith fading into mere form, losing touch with life and being impotent, that is, powerless to warn and guide the people.

If this was a true comparison 30 years ago, I believe it is no less true today and is representative of the religious life in America today, which also reflects much of the condition of the general Mennonite church today. Who would have dreamed 30 years ago that the Mennonite church would have even considered not taking a stand against homosexuality, let alone be divided to the extent that there can be no witness. I believe we will stand in judgment for such a stand.

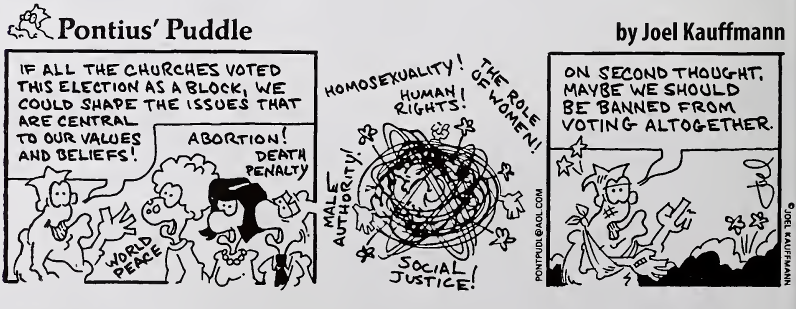
I feel we as a group fit the description above as being impotent to warn and have become so taken up with our peace stand that we are taken up with ourselves and no longer are true to the cause of Christ. Think about it: We have taken the *Gospel* out of the church periodical *Gospel Herald*, now *The Mennonite.* What used to be the Women's Missionary and Service Commission is now Mennonite Women. Pretty obvious, isn't it? Can it be we are now more interested in making followers of the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition than followers of Christ?

Rather than a merger, I feel the Mennonite church today needs repentance, revival and renewal.—*Paul V. Springer, Fisher, Ill.*

No ambiguity

Chester Wenger points out that the Lancaster Conference bishop board allowed local congregations to decide on the membership of divorced people (Readers Say, Aug. 8). He

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


IF ALL THE CHURCHES VOTED THIS ELECTION AS A BLOCK, WE COULD SHAPE THE ISSUES THAT ARE CENTRAL TO OUR VALUES AND BELIEFS!
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DEATH PENALTY
WORLD PEACE
HOMOSEXUALITY!
HUMAN RIGHTS!
THE ROLE OF WOMEN!
MALE AUTHORITY!
SOCIAL JUSTICE!
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ON SECOND THOUGHT, MAYBE WE SHOULD BE BANNED FROM VOTING ALTOGETHER.
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the Mennonite

Vol. 3, No. 33, September 5, 2000

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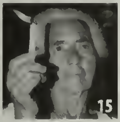
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y readers say

asks, Why not also allow local discernment regarding same-sex partnerships?

I believe there is a major difference between these two issues. With divorce there is much ambiguity and therefore need for local discernment in applying principles. First, Scripture does not condemn all forms of divorce; some passages give exception clauses (Matthew 5:32, 19:9; 1 Corinthians 7:15). So the local church needs to discern if a specific case falls under the exception or not. Second, divorce is not the unforgivable sin; a person can sin in the act of divorce and then later be repentant. The local church is in the best position to judge whether the person is genuinely turning and choosing to follow Christ.

But with homosexuality there is none of that ambiguity. First, Scripture has one consistent message regarding homosexual sex. (I have been listening to those who say that the Spirit allows us an exception for committed, monogamous same-sex partnerships but still have major questions.) Second, though homosexual sex, too, is not unforgivable, here, instead of an act in the past that can be repented of, there is an act still going on. Where there is no repentance, there is no ambiguity whether the person is forgiven or not.—*Harold N. Miller, Corning, N.Y.*

Panic mode

Thanks to Gordon Houser for his insightful editorial ("Present Tense," Aug. 15) reminding us of the spiritual discipline of living in the present tense and the healing it can bring to both mind and body. It is just the reminder I need as I gear up for another busy school year and feel myself slipping into panic mode because of all the deadlines looming on the horizon. Houser's writing is a real gift.—*Earl Zimmerman, Harrisonburg, Va.*

Cover illustration by Merrill Miller

difficult texts of the Bible

Mennonites have always taken the Bible seriously. That was one of the reasons Anabaptism began in the 16th century. Working with the Scriptures through the centuries, however, we've come to realize that taking the Bible seriously and understanding parts of it can be two different things.

Some of these parts will be the subjects of a series of articles that will appear in *The Mennonite* every other issue for the next 20 or so weeks. The series will cover everything from the sons of God marrying the daughters of men (Genesis 6) to the Lamb's War as depicted in Revelation 19. Articles by a variety of writers from throughout the church will deal with the source of evil, the relation of women and men, the place of the Jews in God's plan, and God's will and human freedom.

Our purpose is not to stir up controversy or give final answers on issues that have been difficult for the church for many years. Rather we want to look again at some of these passages for what they may say to us today. In doing so, of course, we will also be dealing with the issue of biblical interpretation and how it affects our lives. Our prayer is that this series will inspire new interest in the Bible, confidence in what it has to say and insight into how we may more faithfully live by its teachings as disciples of Jesus Christ.—*Editors*

An open letter to my daughter on the source of evil

by Arthur Paul Boers

I am the one who creates the light and makes the darkness. I am the one who sends good times and bad times. I, the Lord, am the one who does these things.—Isaiah 45:7 NLT

Dear Erin:

Ever since you became a teenager you asked us, your parents, tough questions. You tell me your biggest question about faith is how one can believe in God with all the pain in the world. With your permission, I write this open letter to you.

This question became important to me when Margaret, my only sibling, died at age 17. (As you were the next Boers born after her death, you brought healing for our grief.) She was a devout Christian and did not deserve to die. I was angry with God and with Christians who gave simple answers, such as these: "She's in heaven." "She's happier now." "All things work together for good for those who love God" (Romans 8.28).

I came close to giving up my faith. I thought, If God can do such cruel things, I am not interested. Later I decided I had too many doubts to believe. But two things changed my mind.

First, I remembered what C.S. Lewis said, that with Jesus' outrageous claims, he must be either liar, lunatic or who he claimed to be. I still loved the Jesus of the Gospels, even if there was much in the church and the Bible that I did not love.

Second, once as I was trying to pray, I knew that God was crying with me. This changed my life. I no longer saw God as distant and harsh, doing whatever inexplicable thing God chose to do. God suffers with us in Jesus' life and death. God wants an end to suffering. God does not want us to choose it. (Much of the evil we endure is chosen by humans). God calls us to struggle against it.

That is why I got involved in peace and justice and became a pastor. I have seen a lot more pain since: in the inner-city of Chicago, where you were born; visiting Haiti; problems in different churches; friends dealing with murder and rape; losing far too many relatives and friends before their time. Some of my most intense experiences of God were in those hard times.

Good and evil: The question Does God cause suffering? is suggested by Isaiah 45:7 (quoted above). This indicates that even Cyrus, Persian ruler and worshiper of pagan gods, is used by God. This was hard for the Israelites to understand. This was also a response to Persian dualism, a belief that there is a never-ending battle between evenly matched powers of good and evil. Biblical faith insists that ultimately God triumphs over evil.

The Bible gives mixed messages on the cause of pain. In Job it is hard to decide why God let the accuser afflict Job. Especially in the Original Testament, there is often a sense that God causes everything, even the behavior of evil rulers (e.g. hardening Pharaoh's heart).

One of my seminary professors said that God's actions are like a librarian who puts books in order. She might not approve of all books but makes the best possible use of them. Perhaps God "orders" what God does not approve. I distinguish between what God wants and what God permits. God wants our highest good but in permissive will allows us choices, even bad ones.

God wants our highest good but in permissive will allows us choices, even bad ones.

More convincing than ideas is experience. The most devout believers, those passionately committed to God, have endured tremendous suffering or worked to alleviate suffering. You and I share some such heroes, Harriet Tubman and Martin Luther King. I saw it in the poor at our Chicago church and in Haiti: No matter how hard their lives, they had a lively sense of God's involvement. North Americans I know who work overseas asked poor folk there about problems of evil and suffering. The answer was startling: The poor say that such philosophical questions are luxuries. Suffering asks hard questions of us: How do we respond to suffering?

There is an irony here. In our affluent society many are selfish. Affluence is not good for us. I hate to say it, but suffering can be a means of growth, teaching compassion. The most important things I learned came through struggle and pain. When you suffer, you'll find better help from others who suffered, too. Wendell Berry, in his novel *A World Lost*, says, "Love can enter only by suffering."

Years ago a middle-aged woman randomly picked our church out of the Yellow Pages. (Or was that God's will?) She was suicidal but in a couple of years moved beyond depression, quit drinking, dealt with her abuse (by and of others) and learned to value herself. Just as she was getting her life together, she faced terminal cancer. She was angry, understandably so. But her sickness made her gentler. Because she was dying, she fixed up damaged relationships. As much as I hated to see her die, she could not have found such healing for herself and others without suffering.

Once, at my favorite monastery, I received bad news in a room where I had often been. For the first time I noticed a quote on the wall. A medieval mystic, Meister Eckhart, said, "Whatever happens to you is the best possible thing for your salvation." I do not preach this at others, but I believe it. I eventually saw that the bad news was actually the best outcome. I can even say now that "all things work together for good." It is because of such convictions that Mennonites oppose violence: We can rely on God and do not need to force things to be the way we prefer.

Hard questions: Part of me is content that we can never solve these hard questions. Elsewhere in Isaiah, God says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways. … For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts." (55:8-9.) There is much about you I do not understand, even though I have known you all your life. I do not understand everything about your mother, and we've been married 20 years. There are even things about myself I do not understand. So how can I pretend to understand and explain God?

But experience and prayer teach me that I can trust God, even though there is much that I do not understand or appreciate.

Recently our cat Smokey needed surgery because of a painful, abscessed tooth. On that big day, he knew something was up. He received no food or drink and was not allowed outside. He even ran from Mom, which is unusual for him. As he got in the car, his anxiety rose; he knows that he only goes there for bad things. His fears were confirmed as he got to the vet's, a familiar but disliked place.

We all felt bad for him. All he knew was that the vet meant pain. We knew it was for his health and alleviation of pain. He'll never understand. We're different species. Some things, alas, we cannot explain to each other. He complained a lot but was not unforgiving. He still trusts us. God is a more trustworthy caretaker than we. Yes, pain and suffering are real and unexplainable. But God, I find, is trustworthy.

I once heard bad news late in an evening and found it hard to sleep in my sadness. The next morning I got up early and went bike riding. I was awed by the beauty of the sky, trees and flowers. How can this all be right when everything is wrong, I wondered. Nature was unaffected by the bad news, and I knew that God is still Lord.

We want God to be more comprehensible. But even when we cannot understand, we're still invited to surrender in trust to this mysterious, transcendent God, who will always be beyond our thoughts and understanding but who loves and cares for us deeply.

The Bible teaches that God is above and beyond us. Psalm 135:6 says, "Whatever the Lord pleases [God] does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps." We want God to be more comprehensible. But even when we cannot understand, we're still invited to surrender in trust to this mysterious, transcendent God, who will always be beyond our thoughts and understanding but who loves and cares for us deeply.

Your Papa.

Arthur Paul Boers is pastor at Bloomingdale (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

The struggle to know

Education in the 21st century must come to terms with the power of evil and learn to confront it.

by John Kampen

The struggle to know has always been part of the student experience. Hard work, long hours of reading, researching, memorizing and writing have been common. While these challenges continue, today we face a different struggle with respect to knowledge.

One of the classic biblical texts concerning the role of higher education has been John 8:32: "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." The Bluffton (Ohio) College motto, in fact, reads, "The truth makes free."

This text bears periodic re-examination. It has been believed throughout the last century and a half that there is a culture that characterizes the educated person. It is the purpose of education to create the kind of person who will contribute to that culture and thereby lead society to achieve its highest ideals. This approach characterizes the fundamental contribution of classical Greek philosophy to our Western civilization. Biblical scholars throughout most of the 20th century have understood this same philosophical tradition to provide the context for the interpretation of John 8:32.

Our times have forced us to confront the power of evil. Knowing in the 21st century will be coming to terms with the all-pervasive nature and power of this reality.

Freedoms prized in Western democratic societies, such as freedom of association, thought, speech, religion and participation in political decision making, are based upon the belief that the passionate and relentless pursuit of the truth by each individual in a society is necessary for its maintenance and growth. This type of truth sustains a free society, permitting character development to flourish.

This approach also has characterized education in Mennonite colleges. The second president of Bluffton, Samuel A. Mosiman, provided an example: "If the Christian college does not succeed in developing Christian character, it fails in its purpose. Realizing this, the Christian college insists that the best preparation for life is Christian training and Christian culture."

Lloyd Ramseyer, president of Bluffton from 1938 to 1965, added an explicit social conscience to the development of Christian character: "The Christian college should produce students who are sensitive to and concerned about the problems which face society. A democracy depends upon an enlightened public for the solution of its problems." In addition to the fulfillment of the maxim "Know thyself," knowing the society around us is crucial to being part of a truly free society.

It is not clear that this kind of theoretical exploration fits the context of John 8. Verse 32 is not one proposition in the developing philosophical treatise; this chapter reflects a nasty debate. In verse 33, the Jews respond that they have never been slaves to anyone. Jesus accuses them of being slaves to sin in verse 34. The diatribe continues with Jesus accusing them of not acting like true children of Abraham (vv. 39-41), with a final explosion recorded in verse 44: "You are from your father the devil, and you choose to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him."

To understand the struggle we must look at John 8:12, in which Jesus says, "I am the light of the world." A new way of understanding this verse and the Gospel of John as a whole opened up in 1947 with the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. We have spent the last 50 years reading those texts and attempting to assess their impact on our understanding of biblical texts.

In one text, called the Community Rule, the adherents of the Jewish sect that authored the scroll are known as the children of light; the rest of the Jews are the children of darkness. As in John 8, there is no attempt to find anything good to say about these opponents, to

appeal to their good side, much less to find common ground. They are in the realm of evil, ruled by Belial, the prince of darkness.

We begin to see what John 8 means in the context of sectarian struggle: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free," free from the all-pervasive power of the realm of evil, free from the clutches of the prince of darkness. To know the truth is to take sides in a struggle, to declare boldly and forthrightly which side you are on. This is the nature of truth and the resulting freedom in the Gospel of John.

What will it mean to know something in the 21st century? Left with the legacy of the 20th century, the most amazing discovery is not the advances in technology, even though they are significant and revolutionary. It is rather the public and widespread recognition of the power of evil. Our times have forced us to confront this question. Knowing in the 21st century will be coming to terms with the all-pervasive nature and power of this reality.

The most well-known 20th-century event that forced a recognition of the power of evil is the Holocaust. The Holocaust grew out of the moral and political will to destroy an entire people with massive technological experimentation and advances. Six million Jews and an estimated total population of 11 million to 12 million, including gypsies, homosexuals and certain native populations, were destroyed in a disastrously misguided attempt to create the leadership for a brave, new world.

In 1900, W.E.B. DuBois, the most important African-American intellectual of the modern world, declared that the problem of the 20th century would be the color line. He had already survived the optimism of reconstruction and experienced the racism that has plagued African-American life up to the present day and is so insidious that it still holds the nation hostage. An analysis of its enduring hold is inadequate if it does not include the fundamental reality of the power of evil.

How can we begin to comprehend the fact that an entire race of people could be enslaved because of the color of their skin without recognizing the problem of evil and asking, What is it about human beings that makes such an occurrence possible? The genocide of native peoples throughout this century speaks to the same reality: Armenia earlier in the century, East Timor, Somalia and other venues provide daily illustrations of the power of evil.

I know this from my own Mennonite family experience: a grandfather left to die in the Ukraine in his early 20s, a grandmother who never spoke about the traumatic years of the Russian revolution. To know the truth today is to recognize the power of humanity to dehumanize, to enslave, to degrade and to destroy. There is no naive knowledge left.

We wish it were not so. We wish we could make simple intellectual choices between abstract principles that didn't have such grave consequences. But we can't.

To know the truth is to take up the struggle—to join forces with people struggling for life and dignity, to join hands with others who look for ways in which we can create an environment that supports a diversity of ways of living, to find effective ways to counteract those forces in a global economy that attempts to turn us into homogeneous consumers, to form alliances with individuals and groups who are dispossessed by the growing disparity between the poor and the rich on an international scale, to be part of a coalition that creates a society that doesn't need more prisons. This is the struggle in which we are engaged. To know the truth is to acknowledge this evil and confront it.

In taking up that struggle we encounter the joy and freedom of the gospel. We are now not constrained by conventional perceptions or expectations. We have been made new, transformed into forces of liberation.

We are free to enter into the lives of people around the globe who are different from us, to hear their stories, to tell them our stories, to form bonds of allegiance that will unite us in a common struggle for dignity and humanity.

We are free to reject the racist underpinnings of our structures as we engage in the exhilarating task of transforming and building new and different ones. We are free to enter into the lives and experiences of other peoples we were never expected to encounter because the truth has set us free.

The challenge of the 21st century is ominous. But in John 14:6 Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life." The 21st century can be a time of victory. All we have to do is to commit ourselves to the struggle to really know and we will become free. Truth is in the struggle.

John Kampen is vice president and dean of academic affairs at Bluffton (Ohio) College. This article is based on a sermon he gave at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

We are free to enter into the lives of people around the globe who are different from us, to hear their stories, to tell them our stories, to form bonds of allegiance that will unite us in a common struggle for dignity and humanity.

Latin America researcher finds 'where life is' to produce first fruits for MWC history project

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

The sisters and brothers of the congregations feel that this is their project because they ... are the actors of this history being narrated.

—Jaime Prieto

GUATEMALA CITY—Reading lives, not books, is how Jaime Prieto collected most of the Latin American part of the Global Mennonite History Project.

Prieto, a church history professor from Costa Rica, is the first writer to complete research on his portion of the Mennonite World Conference (MWC) project, which is designed to tell of Anabaptism in all parts of the world. The Latin American volume, which will also be based on written documents, is scheduled to be published by spring 2003.

For about seven months last year, Prieto traveled to 20 countries to interview about 350 people about the histories of their faith communities. He listened to more than 300 hours of stories from members of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations while he visited in their homes and worshiped in their churches. Around meal tables and in living rooms, he tape-recorded talks with people from oral-tradition cultures. Their history is often passed to the next generation in spoken stories rather than the written word.

But they did more than talk, Prieto said. They opened their lives to him. They welcomed him into their families and churches when the work took him far from his 3-year-old son and wife.

"I got very close to the [people] I met," Prieto said in a report given to MWC General Council members July 21 during meetings in Guatemala City. "I lived, I slept, I shared with them their joys, their struggles and their desires to serve God.

"The sisters and brothers of the congregations feel that this is their project, because they themselves, with their lives and testimonies, are the actors of this history being narrated.

"Talking with people who have lived the history is fundamental, because it is the unofficial history told from people who have never written a letter but who follow Jesus in happiness," he said. "We also take written history very seriously, too. ... But [stories] are where life is and where God challenges the church. We need to unify these two [oral and written] currents."

When it launched the project in 1997, the MWC General Council hoped to tap into 150 years of history from churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America—continents whose Anabaptist churches now have more members than those in North America and Europe.

By telling stories from the South, the project can provide a more holistic chronicle of a global church no longer defined only by perspectives from the North, said project coordinator John Lapp of Akron, Pa., a historian and a former executive secretary of Mennonite Central Committee.

"It's a pioneering effort, a new attempt to recover and tell stories that are essential in our understanding of the worldwide [Anabaptist] movement," Lapp said. "But the task of recovering the ... story in new contexts is not easy. ... Within each continent there are multiple conferences, several languages, ethnicities."

Prieto is the only historian to work on his project single-handedly. Three writers are working on the Asia volume, which is due for publication in 2004. Two writers from Africa, named this spring, hope to have their volume ready by the 2003 MWC assembly, scheduled to be held in Zimbabwe. Lapp is seeking a third writer for Africa who speaks French.

Project personnel haven't decided whether to do volumes on North America and Europe.

The volumes will be published in several languages. Individuals, historical committees and a private Mennonite family foundation have contributed about $265,000 of the projected budget of $425,000, Lapp said.

Prieto is producing the project's first fruits — fruit sweetened by faith often born out of suffering. "I saw so many beautiful things and heard so many testimonies ... of God healing people," he said.

"In one of the K'ekchi [an indigenous Guatemalan ethnic group] churches, I still remember the rhythm of the marimbas, growing and growing, as the Spirit filled and filled the church within and without," Prieto said. "And I remember the beautiful testimonies in Colombia, of brothers and sisters who ... dare to preach the gospel of peace in our convulsing world."

The project can challenge the global church to grow beyond the past into the future, he said. "The testimonies can build solidarity that goes beyond our own church walls," he said. "They show us how the spirit of Jesus Christ is moving among the churches. They challenge us to understand history but push us to continue to live the life of Jesus Christ."*—Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

New CPT campaign targets violent toys

Participants will rate merchandise on store shelves

Christian Peacemaker Teams believes that play is serious business. So serious that CPT wants to enlist support for a campaign to get stores to remove or restrict the display and sale of toys and games that are considered violent.

The project, called Violence Is Not Child's Play, provides materials for volunteers to inspect local stores and rate their merchandise for glorification of hurting and killing others, sexism and other forms of physical and psychological domination.

"It seems to us that it's clear that [violent games and toys are] a contributing factor, but not the only factor, to a violent culture," says CPT staff member Rich Meyer.

CPT groups have made toy store visitations since at least the mid-1990s, usually involving dramatic public demonstrations. But now the organization wants to get more people involved, "people who didn't want to march into a toy store and make a scene," Meyer says.

Violence Is Not Child's Play packets, available from CPT offices in the United States and Canada, include rating sheets that ask inspectors to score the store in a variety of categories, including the sale of realistic-looking toy guns, violent video games, toys that create the need for an enemy, toys that negatively depict ethnic or racial groups, store displays and promotions and availability of nonviolent toys and games.

The volunteer inspectors are encouraged to visit with store management, both to let them know of their visit ahead of time and to share the results of the inspection. "Retail store managers are, or should be, attentive to the local community," Meyer says.

The packets also include background sample news releases, bulletin announcements and background materials on violent toys and games.

It is an issue that is receiving increasing attention in many arenas. In a July summit, the American Medical Association, American Psychological Association, American Academy of Pediatrics and American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry drew a direct link between entertainment violence and aggressive or violent behavior in children.

"Television, movies, music and interactive games are powerful learning tools and highly influential," said a joint statement from the four groups. "But when these entertainment media showcase violence—and particularly in a context which glamorizes or trivializes it—the lessons learned can be destructive."

Also this summer, Indianapolis placed violent coin-operated video off-limits to children.

CPT hopes to eventually get 500 congregations participating in Violence Is Not Child's Play. Meyer said it might also be attractive to residents of retirement communities. "We're looking at the idea that grandparents could be a major part of this campaign," he said.

CPT earlier this year tested the campaign in five locations before going public with it.—*Rich Preheim*

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Face off

José Mireles (center) prepares to start a street hockey game in the parking lot of Parlier (Calif.) Mennonite Brethren Church. Mireles was one of 80 young adults who served this summer with Mennonite Central Committee's Summer Service Program. The program allows young adults of diverse ethnic backgrounds to serve in their home communities. Mireles organized youth activities at Parlier, such as flag football and board games in addition to street hockey.

Students create Napster solution

John Cormie and Matt Goyer, students at Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont., wanted the new album by the Canadian band Tragically Hip. They also knew they could get it for free with Napster, the controversial service that allows computer-users to download music off the Internet at no charge.

"But that's not fair," Goyer says. "So we started thinking about how much the artist gets when we buy a [compact disc], and we worked all night on the idea."

That idea was Fairtunes, created this summer to give people the opportunity to compensate artists for music they have downloaded.

The proceeds so far have been modest—about $1,200 to be forwarded to various artists. The first checks were mailed last month.

Cormie and Goyer are now looking for investors and are considering opening a California office.—*Globe and Mail*

Creating space for reconciliation to occur

Northern Ireland worker links Protestants and Catholics

DUNGANNON, Northern Ireland—It's a weeknight session at a community college about 40 miles west of Belfast, and nearly two dozen adults have gathered for a continuing-education class. A Catholic woman describes her first significant contact with Protestants, explaining her work at a place that employed both Catholics and Protestants. She recounts her feelings when an Irish Republican Army bombing injured several Protestants. She and another Catholic colleague felt they couldn't face their Protestant co-workers.

"We actually went out with our heads hanging, like we'd done it ourselves," the woman says.

"That's happened to everyone on both sides," a Protestant woman quickly reassures her, saying that Protestants, too, have felt shame over violent actions by paramilitaries in their name.

"The one thing we can all do to bring about change in our country is to increase the amount of diversity within it," says the group's facilitator, Joe Campbell, assistant director of the Mediation Network for Northern Ireland. "Your coming here … is an important contribution. If we are being brought up in a divided society and we have gone to separate schools or churches, we have to work very hard to understand the other side."

As joint Ireland program director for Mennonite Board of Missions and Mennonite Central Committee, Campbell works to create such places where reconciliation can occur.

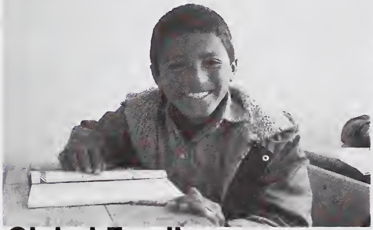
A Presbyterian elder who studied at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., in 1987-88, Campbell helped found the Mediation Network in 1990. Campbell and the network's director, Brendan McAllister, negotiated a peaceful settlement to a 1995 conflict over a proposed Protestant march through a Catholic neighborhood in Portadown. In 1997, he received a prestigious Member of the Order of the British Empire honor from Queen Elizabeth II for his work.

"I have a great sense of working with God," Campbell says. "I don't see my work as being separated from my witness and my Christian experience. I don't think the church sees my work as working with God, but it should. There are few greater spiritual experiences than seeing two people or two groups unite, when they were once at enmity. When I see that, it is a spiritual experience. That is the gospel."

Campbell's work has not come without a cost. In fall 1998, at the urging of the government, Campbell and his wife, Janet, installed a video-surveillance security system in their Belfast-area home, where they live with their three children. Anti-bomb technology also was installed in Campbell's car.

One of Campbell's techniques is "intermediation," a process of shuttle diplomacy between two sides that refuse to meet face to face. The process involves transporting information to each group, facilitating confidential discussions with each side and establishing communication channels.

"We're not postmen just taking cold messages," Campbell says. "We're giving them a sense of the other side."—*Tom Price of MBM New Service*



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Venezuelans' desire to bring action and theology back together leads to founding island community

MCC photo by Laureano Mora

Rolando Gomez (left) and Erwin Mirabel of the Christian Community of the Way, Margarita Island, Venezuela, pose with relief supplies. Members distributed Mennonite Central Committee-donated supplies to mudslide victims last December.

MARGARITA ISLAND, Venezuela—On Margarita Island, Venezuela's prime vacation spot, walls outline what will one day be a living room, bedroom and kitchen. But for now, the unfinished house stands roofless. It also stands as a testimony to community.

The structure belongs to Laureano Mora and Ismelda Castillo, a young couple with one child. Mora and Castillo are one of four couples who constitute the Christian Community of the Way, a group on the island with Mennonite connections that began meeting a year ago.

"Being a disciple of God isn't just going to church, clapping your hands," says Mora. "It's helping your neighbor and loving your enemy."

The Christian Community of the Way was initiated by Erwin Mirabel and his wife, Haydee. Many years ago, Mirabel attended a seminar by John Driver, longtime Mennonite Board of Missions worker in Latin America. There Mirabel encountered Driver's book *Militantes para Un Mundo Nuevo (Activists for a New World)*, a study of the Sermon on the Mount. Mirabel became intrigued by what he saw as "a divorce between practice and theory" in the church. He and Haydee began to search for ways to bring action and theology back together.

The Mirabels formed a study group, which after six months became a church and a community. The Christian Community of the Way had been born.

"I became aware of the reality of Jesus," says member Manuel Estaba. "Not long ago what was mine was mine, but now what's mine I share. The Lord wants me to get rid of selfishness."

Estaba and his wife, Yarlenis, opened their house to Mora and Castillo, who needed a place to live, and together the group began building the new house for them that is now partially completed. When it is finished, they will begin work on a home for another family.

The Christian Community of the Way also understands that living a Christian life means reaching out and helping others. When mudslides hit the mainland last December and some of the victims moved to the island to make a new home, the new community turned the sitting room of Mora and Castillo's house into a warehouse for relief supplies provided by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

In addition to food, the community distributed relief buckets, the pails and supplies bought with funds from MCC. The buckets' contents included Bibles. But instead of putting the Bibles inside the buckets with the rest of the articles, group members carefully wrote each recipient's name inside the cover and under it a quote from early Anabaptist leader Hans Denck, "No one can know Christ truly, except they follow him daily in life."

From its beginning, the Christian Community of the Way established ties with the Mennonite Church in Venezuela. But community members are only beginning to discover what that means. "I have been able to change inside and to change my behavior," says Aída Vegas. "If you need to call me Mennonite because I behave like this, then call me Mennonite."—*Daryl Yoder-Bontrager for MCC News Service*

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by the way ...

Over the last five years, the Mennonite Library and Archives in North Newton, Kan., has received an annual average of 108 cubic feet of donated archival material. —*Gleanings from the Threshing Floor*

MWC letter decries Congo violence

STRASBOURG, France—In a letter to world leaders, Mennonite World Conference (MWC) has called for an end to the fighting in the Democratic Republic of Congo, which has involved a number of nations in central Africa's Great Lakes region.

The letter, signed by MWC president Mesach Krisetya and executive secretary Larry Miller, was sent to United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, the 15 members of the U.N. Security Council and leaders of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola, Burundi, Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Belgium, France and the United States.

"The various parties involved in this war have lacked the will to propose a lasting solution that will allow the people of the region to live in peace with one another," the letter says.

It continues: "We are called to settle our differences through dialogue rather than taking up arms and resorting to violent means. Our Lord calls us to identify with those who suffer and to bind up their wounds."—*MWC News Service*

Ex-GC Illinois congregation joins EMC

UPLAND, Ind.—Congerville (Ill.) Mennonite Church, formerly a member of the General Conference Mennonite Church, was welcomed as a fully participating congregation of the Evangelical Mennonite Church during the EMC's convention last month in Upland, Ind.

Congerville, organized in 1896, was a charter member of the Central Illinois Mennonite Conference when it was formed in 1908. The group joined the General Conference Mennonite Church in 1945. Congerville, which has a membership of more than 300, withdrew its GC and Central District Conference memberships this summer. At its annual session in July, Central District gave a prayer of blessing for Congerville.

Bluffton College donations reach record high

BLUFFTON, Ohio—The 1999-2000 fiscal year was a record-breaker for Bluffton College. Giving to the Bluffton College Fund, which supports annual operating costs, totaled $910,000, the highest in school history. Total giving to all causes was more than $2.4 million.

Former Goshen soccer player named head coach

GOSHEN, Ind.—Bess Briggs, a 1998 Goshen (Ind.) College graduate and former soccer standout, has been named head coach of the Maple Leafs' women's soccer team. Last year she was an assistant coach at Lakeland College in Sheboygan, Wis.

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Births

Dueck, Ashton Raine, June 27, to Kim (Friesen) and Rod Dueck, Altona, Man.

Ernst, Joshua Tillis, July 28, to Lisa (Ebhert) and Shane Ernst, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Fontaine, Evan Thomas, June 28, to Mark and Rebecca (Troyer) Fontaine, Indianapolis.

Gingerich, Isabella Rose, July 23, to Donovan and Heather (Kerschner) Gingerich, Goshen, Ind.

Hess, Clara Elizabeth, Aug. 6, to David and Starla (Sensenig) Hess, Lancaster, Pa.

Jantzen, Ryan Michael, Aug. 14, to Dean and Kori (Eckert) Jantzen, Akron, Pa.

Leidig, Benjamin Wayne, July 27, to Kevin and Regina Leidig, Wellman, Iowa.

Longacre, Isaac William, June 12, to Catharine and William Longacre, Quakertown, Pa.

Moyer, Ethan Jacob, July 29, to Kamila (Moravec) and Steven Moyer, Harleysville, Pa.

Nissley, Jacob Daniel, Aug. 5, to Darin and Ramona (Shetler) Nissley, Canton, Ohio.

Ott, Peyton Lee, Aug. 6, to Justin and Tammy (Eggers) Ott, Atkinson, Neb.

Parcell, Zachary Donald, Aug. 9, to Bill and Eva (Gagnon) Parcell, Wakarusa, Ind.

Peters, Paige Ashlyn, Aug. 10, to Cindi (Chvatal) and Rodney Peters, Bancroft, Neb.

Rampogu, Angelica, July 22, to Paul and Rina (Dhruna) Rampogu, Quakertown, Pa.

Reeves, Caroline Anna, July 13, to Cheryl Patterson-Reeves and Ray Reeves, Harper, Iowa.

Rodes, Jessica Dawn, July 14, to Julia (Clemmer) and Owen Rodes, Goshen, Ind.

Shuck, Calvin Jay Stucky, July 20, to Carla (Stucky) and Steve Shuck, Beatrice, Neb.

Sorensen, Hannah Grace, July 20, to Evan and Julie Sorensen, La Crescenta, Calif.

Tabolt, Tabitha Renee, Aug. 4, to Bruce and Robin (Widrick) Tabolt, Croghan, N.Y.

Thomas, Seth Samuel, July 9, to Carol (Slabach) and Eldon Thomas, Goshen, Ind.

Wehmeyer, Madeleine Lilith, July 21, to Brett and Bridgette (Yoder) Wehmeyer, Iowa City, Iowa.

Marriages

Ballard/Schrag: Britney Ballard, Lawrence, Kan., and Bradley Schrag, Lawrence, Aug. 12 at Lawrence.

Belsley/Pearce: Amie Belsley, Morton, Ill., and Jason Pearce, Morton, June 10 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.

Chisholm/Millsap: Sarah Chisholm, Lakewood, Colo., and Curtis Millsap, Springfield, Mo., Aug. 13 at Rocky Mountain Mennonite Camp, Divide, Colo.

Claassen/Pearson: Stacy Claassen, Beatrice, Neb., and Gayla Gibson Pearson, Beatrice, Aug. 12 at Chautauqua Park Tabernacle, Beatrice.

Dutkiewicz/Willems: Rob Dutkiewicz, Niles, Mich., and Kate Willems, Goshen, Ind., July 22 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

Eash/Harrison: Joanna Eash, Louisville, Colo., and Duane Harrison, Lafayette, Colo., May 13 at Boulder Valley Church of Christ, Boulder, Colo.

Fisher/Keim: Kathy Fisher, Logan, Ohio, and Albert Keim, Harrisonburg, Va., July 23 at Turkey Run Mennonite Church, Logan.

Fontaine/Voth: Riki Fontaine, Hutchinson, Kan., and Tyler Voth, Inman, Kan., Aug. 5 at Hutchinson.

Friesen/Timken: Stephanie Friesen, Newton, Kan., and Matt Timken, Salina, Kan., July 8 at Emmanuel Four Square Church, Salina.

Frye/Graber: Eber Frye, Middlebury, Ind., and Rosa Graber, Shipshewana, Ind., Aug. 5 at Shore Mennonite Church, Shipshewana.

Fuller/Hall: Brian Fuller, Mansfield, Ohio, and Bethany Hall, Hartville, Ohio, Aug. 13 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Greaser/Schroeder: Jeff Greaser, Lakewood, Colo., and Tiffany Schroeder, Littleton, Colo., Aug. 12 at Sedalia, Colo.

Gunther/Jantzen: Sonia Gunther, Diller, Neb., and Keith Jantzen, Beatrice, Neb., Aug. 12 at First Mennonite Church, Beatrice.

Heft/Miller: Holly Heft, Hartville, Ohio, and Steve Miller, Hartville, June 16 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Hartville.

Johnson/Miller: Kory Johnson, Des Moines, Iowa, and Kina Miller, Kalona, Iowa, Aug. 12 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Kauffman/Rasmussen: Matthew Kauffman, Vancouver, Wash., and Christina Rasmussen, Vancouver, Aug. 12 at Brush Prairie Baptist Church, Vancouver.

Lindh/Nussbaum: Norma Lindh, Eugene, Ore., and Lyle Nussbaum, Dalton, Ohio, July 22 at Eugene.

Miller/Stuckey: Melody Miller, Middlebury, Ind., and Wayne Stuckey, Goshen, Ind., July 29 at Griner Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Miller/Worthman: Melissa Miller, Millersburg, Ind., and Zackery Worthman, Goshen, Ind., Aug. 12 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Rafaniello/Wehri: Peter Rafaniello, Pohatcong Township, N.J., and Kirstie Wehri, Bluffton, Ohio, May 20 at St. Barbara's Catholic Church, Cloverdale, Ohio.

Deaths

Derstine, Anna Clymer, 91, Sellersville, Pa., died Aug. 8 of small bowel carcinoma. Spouse: Howard Derstine. Parents: Samuel and Lizzie Detweiler Clymer (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Larry, Mark; 15 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 11 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

DeSanto, Charles, 76, Fort Wayne, Ind., died Aug. 8 of a stroke. Spouse: Norma DeSanto. Parents: Michael and Jennie DeSanto (deceased). Other survivors: children Stephen, Deborah, Susan Prendergast, Timothy; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 12 at North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo, Ind.

Funk, Edna Ruth Loganbill, 99, North Newton, Kan., died Aug. 16. Spouse: Arnold Funk (deceased). Parents: John and Anna Moser Loganbill (deceased). Survivors: children Marjorie Schroeder, Frederick, Francis, Shirley Harms, Barbara Reimer; 18 grandchildren; 25 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 19 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Godshall, Abram, 65, Newport News, Va., died Aug. 7 of cancer. Spouse: Joann Godshall. Parents: Abram and Elsie Gehman Godshall (deceased). Other survivors: children Janice Porter, Julie Forbes, Allen; five grandchildren. Memorial service: Aug. 11 at Huntington Mennonite Church, Newport News.

Heinrichs, Anna Spenst, 92, Altona, Man., died Aug. 2. Spouse: Jacob Heinrichs (deceased). Parents: Peter and Katherine Spenst (deceased). Survivors: children Kay Loewen, Jake, Dora Bircham, Pete, Raymond, Anne Janzen; 19 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 7 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Herr, Elizabeth Witmer, 100, Barto, Pa., died Aug. 2. Spouse: Elvin Herr (deceased). Parents: Elam and Elizabeth Bachman Witmer (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Susan Burkholder, Ellen Longacre; 14 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 7 at Rawlinsville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Jantzen, Harold, 77, Beatrice, Neb., died Aug. 6. Spouse: Anna Louise Jantzen. Parents: Henry and Louise Ensz Jantzen (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Louise Brockmeier, Ruby Doyle; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 10 at Beatrice.

Kehler, Katherine Wiebe, 92, Altona, Man., died June 21. Spouse: Herman Kehler (deceased). Parents: Jake and Susan Wiebe (deceased). Survivors: children Susan Toews, Frieda Hiebert; 16 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: June 23 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Kreider, Mary, 85, Lancaster, Pa., died Aug. 10. Parents: John Kreider and Lily Mae Good Kreider Zook (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 14 at Lancaster, Pa.

Litwiller, Barb, 54, Washington, Iowa, died June 27 from an auto accident. Spouse: Keith Litwiller. Parents: Sam and Jean Walker. Other survivors: children Chad, Aimee Miller. Funeral: June 30 at Washington (Iowa) Mennonite Church.

Quiring, Lena Penner, 102, Henderson, Neb., died Aug. 5. Spouse: John Quiring (deceased). Parents: John and Helena Dick Penner (deceased). Survivors: children Herman, Sophia Buller, Elda Peters, Thelma Veleba, Louis; 22 grandchildren; 45 great-grandchildren; five great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 9 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Regehr, Arlin, 53, Inman, Kan., died July 29 of cancer. Spouse: Janet Regehr. Other survivors: children Brad, Susan Achilles, Rock; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 2 at Inman Mennonite Church.

Regier, Arnold, 87, Newton, Kan., died Aug. 6. Spouse: Helen Regier. Parents: Henry and Anna Regier Regier (deceased). Other survivors: son Paul; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 10 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Reimer, Wilbert, 81, North Newton, Kan., died Aug. 13. Spouse: Rubie Reimer. Parents: David and Caroline Voth Reimer (deceased). Other survivors: children Betty Wyckoff, James; three grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 17 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton.

Yousey, Emma, 87, Lowville, N.Y., died July 6. Parents: Menno and Lena Yousey (deceased). Funeral: July 10 at Lowville Mennonite Church.

Zampier, Ed, 79, Lansdale, Pa., died July 26. Spouse: Bernice Zampier. Other survivors: children Robert, John, Michael; five grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 31 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale.

Zimmerman, Ruth, 77, Mechanicsburg, Pa., died Aug. 9. Spouse: Paul Zimmerman Sr. (deceased). Survivors: children Norman, Paul Jr., Jay, George, Erma Sollenberger, Grace Willard, Eunice Martin; 21 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 14 at Slate Hill Mennonite Church, Camp Hill, Pa.

Correction: In the August 5 deaths, Pauline Mast Shenk's daughter was listed as Eleanor Lynch and should have been Grace Lynch.

classifieds

- **Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship**, a worshiping congregation of approximately 170 in Goshen, Ind., seeks an ***additional pastor*** to serve on their leadership team. This person will have primary responsibility for the preaching and teaching ministry as well as vision and mission planning.

  Written inquiries, resumes and Ministerial Leadership Information forms should be sent to Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship, c/o Search Committee, 2509 Berkey Ave., Goshen, IN 46526. Contacts should be made on or before Sept. 10, 2000.

- **Providence Mennonite Church**, Newport News, Va., is hosting a ***centennial celebration, Oct. 7-8, 2000.*** Request registration forms before Sept. 1 from Providence Centennial Committee, 13101 Warwick Blvd., Newport News, VA 23602; 757-249-2702; fax 757-881-9709; email <pmcnn@aol.com>.

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—Lee Snyder, moderator,
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Mission impassioned

by Laurie L. Oswald

The Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation in Guatemala City evoked passion. In lively discussions July 12-16, participants grappled to define mission and to envision a structure that will further God's kingdom.

Some sought to nail down a definition and structure, leading to a fixed destination. Others trusted that relationships fostered during the consultation would provide journeymates for a trek leading through uncharted territory.

Whatever one's views—pro-structure, pro-relationship or a blend of the two—passion is crucial to our trip ahead.

It shows God's people care about what God cares about. A mission definition drafted by participants—open to further revision and testing—is a balanced and broad starting point:

"Mission is defined as actions in words and deeds by churches and their agencies which witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ to persons and peoples outside the community of Christians.

"The focus for our exploration of cooperation in mission is on cross-cultural or international mission activities whose goal is to form and nurture new communities of Christian faith among other people groups.

"Mission activities would include preaching, teaching, intercessory prayer, fasting, healing, deliverance, church planting, social services, disaster relief, development aid, peacemaking, conflict mediation and training ministries."

This humanly impossible challenge humbles us. Most important to its fulfillment are not definitions, structures or relationships but passion.

If we aren't impassioned for doing God's work in Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit in response to God's passion for us, then we will lose our way, no matter how good the map or how many travel with us.

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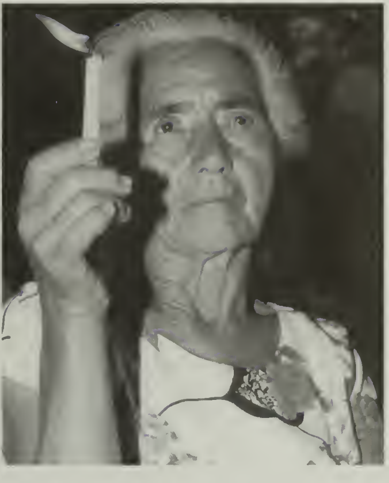
One candle

Filled with the greatness of God's global church but tired from picture-taking at day's end of a joint worship service in Guatemala City on July 16, I wanted to finish my roll of film and get on the bus.

Throughout the stadium, hundreds of people from many lands and races had participated in Communion to conclude the Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation. Smoke from candles they held high in the air for a final prayer wafted around the faces of Latin Americans, Europeans, North Americans, Asians and Africans. One by one, they blew out their flames and left.



Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

As I stood up from crouching in the aisle, I turned to see an elderly Guatemalan woman with a weathered, lined face. She sat still as a statue, holding her lighted candle (above). For what seemed like an eternity she gazed into the single flame, lingering in its light.

Shocked to see such stillness in the midst of swirling humanity, I suddenly remembered my camera and clicked the last picture on the roll. In that second, I knew I had tried in vain to capture the mysterious essence of that gathering—the light of Christ shining in the eyes of his people, never to be extinguished.

From all I had heard about how war had swept through Guatemala, leaving poverty, broken trust and emotional scars in its wake, I could guess at how lines had etched this woman's face. Perhaps she had lost a husband or child in the violence. Perhaps she toiled hard to eat.

Less understandable was how certain she seemed of that one small flame, how much fortitude remained in her eyes.

I tried to regain some professional composure and pull away from this Guatemalan woman with whom I could not speak.

As the bus revved away from the teeming crowd, I knew that even though I'd take home a picture, a piece of my North American soul would forever remain in that moment when she and I shared her wordless testimony of Christ.

Laurie L. Oswald is associate editor for Mennonite Weekly Review. *She wrote this piece for Meetinghouse, a Mennonite editors group.*

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Gordon Houser

Beyond facts and magic

The truth will make you free.—John 8:32

As much as we like to lift up the Bible's importance and quote from it, I wonder how seriously we really take it. We claim it is inspired, but does it inspire us?

The *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective* calls the Bible "the essential book of the church," yet it's rarely read at any length in our services. In spite of the Protestant emphasis on "Scripture alone," I find more Scripture read and prayed in Catholic groups than in most Protestant congregations.

An increasing number of Mennonite congregations are using the Common Lectionary, with its weekly Scripture passages listed on the back of our church bulletins. Yet how many of our congregations actually read those passages aloud in our services? If we call it the Word of God, shouldn't we give it more respect and actually listen to it regularly?

We also face the alarming growth of biblical illiteracy, not only in our society but in our congregations. You read surveys that show, for instance, that only 25 percent of Americans can name one of the four Gospels. But I fear Mennonites' knowledge of the Bible is not much better.

Let us take time to read Scripture, and let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us let the Bible read us and make us free.

At an annual men and boys retreat last spring, the organizers held a skit imitating the TV show "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" but using questions about the Bible. I was appalled at most of the boys' ignorance of Scripture. I imagine more can identify Michael Jordan than the Jordan River.

We have our work cut out in developing greater biblical literacy among our people. Yet the goal is not simply to know more biblical facts. Rather we want to learn from the Bible because we believe it helps shape us into being more Christlike. As our confession states, "All Scripture is inspired by God through the Holy Spirit for instruction in salvation and training in righteousness."

At the opposite end of ignoring the Bible is treating it as a kind of talisman, as magical. We may quote it to ward off our enemies or keep people in line, but do we let it engage us, grip us, guide us into greater righteousness?

When we view the Bible as a magical book, something we use for our own purposes, we tend not to question its meaning. Even more, we don't let it question us.

Too many of us don't believe Jesus when he says, "The truth will make you free." We fear pursuing the truth because it may change us. Or we identify truth with facts. Scripture scholar Marcus Borg has written, "We live in the only culture in human history that has equated truth with factuality." Thus we get into arguments about creation and evolution or whether or not miracles happened in a certain way.

One summer during my college years I worked on a road construction crew. I proudly used philosophical and other arguments to convince one of my co-workers of the truth of Christianity. But he was unwilling to give his life to Christ. I had persuaded him of certain factual truths, but he had not encountered the Truth that is Jesus (John 14:6).

In her book *Amazing Grace: A Vocabulary of Faith* (Riverhead Books, 1998), Kathleen Norris writes about the desert monastic tradition in which monks asked an elder for "a word," a verse from Scripture to guide them. Then the monks went back to their cells to meditate on that word until it became part of them and they were living it out.

She writes that "too much discussion of Scripture and spiritual matters can foster an illusory sense of holiness in people who have not yet faced themselves." The truth cannot set us free until we face it fully and honestly and let it speak to us.

In this issue (page 4) we begin a series on difficult texts of the Bible. We may view these as texts that are hard to figure out. For me, the most difficult texts are not the most complicated ones but those that challenge me most to live out the way of Jesus. For example, I find "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you" (Luke 6:27) a difficult text.

Let us take time to read Scripture, and let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us let the Bible read us and make us free.—*gh*

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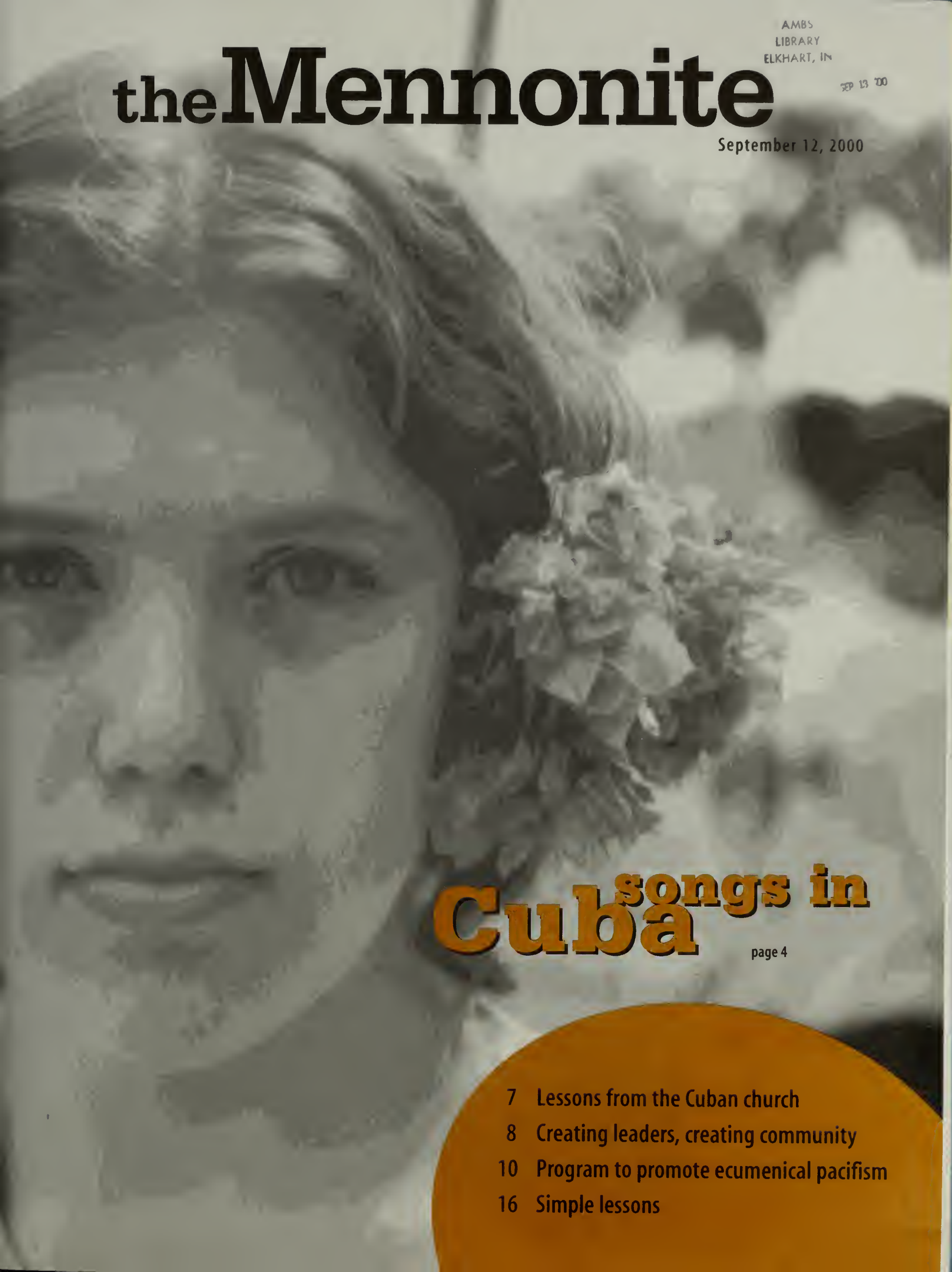

Cuba songs in

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The sounds of silence

Two Readers Say letters in the Aug. 29 issue state that Mennonites are silent on abortion. I have heard similar statements on several other occasions. I consider myself a fairly good listener and my hearing is not that bad, but I simply do not hear that silence.

Instead, I hear the sound of Guidelines on Abortion by the General Conference Mennonite Church (1980). I hear the sound of the Mennonite Church statement on abortion (1975). I hear the sound of the MCC Resource Packet on Abortion. I hear the sound of congregations and individuals in those congregations embracing women with unwanted pregnancies and assuring them that they and their unborn child are loved. I hear the sound of Sunday school teachers and youth leaders teaching our youth that all life, including the unborn, is sacred. I spend a lot of time in a neighborhood where the chance of children being sexually active before they are 16 is greater than 80 percent. I hear the sound of my congregation becoming active in that neighborhood to lessen that chance. These are only the sounds that I hear. I'm sure there are others.

If these are sounds of silence, then let there be silence. Perhaps we need only turn up the volume.—*Ted Zerger, Salina, Kan.*

Heaven and earth

God created the universe. Humans intrepret what they examine. That is science. God gave Adam the task of naming the animals—the beginning of science, as it still goes on when a new species is discovered and is given a name appropriate to its characteristics.

But the science of the Bible reflects the understandings of the observers of the day. So the sun, moon and stars were believed to be circling the earth, according to Ecclesiastes 1:5. Copernicus and Galileo upset the scientists of their day, and also the church, when they thought they had sufficient proof of the earth circling the sun, rather than the reverse. Martin Luther believed that the wandering stars (the planets) were controlled directly by God, who would not entrust that obligation even to the angels. However, final proof that the sun, rather than the earth, is the center of the solar system was not provided by scientists until as recently as 1830.

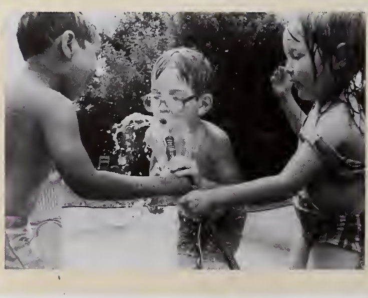
Another example: In the Bible, only women and old men could be "barren." The invention of the microscope enlarged an understanding of "barrenness," an affliction that some men probably have always shared with women.

God's message to humanity is independent of the incidental, ancient science it contains. Believing God's message in the Bible does not require that we deny that which we see through eyes and instruments when we examine God's wonderful universe.—*John J. Bergen, Edmonton*

I would like to suggest that geology is a matter of interpretation of the evidence. I once had a geology professor who did not debate the issue when we asked about the Scriptures vs. the long geological age of Darwinism. He just asked us if we were around to observe the development of the universe. No one could say that we were there, so there was no one around as an observer but only the one who was doing the creating.

My mother told me that our God was the creator of science and that some day science and the Scriptures would be more in agreement. Science is constantly changing. What I was taught is different from what my children are being taught. Not all the scientists agree with each other, either. Do your own research and

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*


Vada Snider

Picture purity

It is common knowledge that the teaching and virtue of modesty of attire has fallen on hard times in Christendom, and the Mennonite church is no exception. The acceptance and condoning of the picture on the cover of the Aug. 15 issue (left) is a slap in the face of Paul's and Peter's teachings on proper Christian attire. The practice and display of immodesty militates against purity of thought and holy living.—*Albert Eberly, Irwin, Ohio*

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readers say

don't take the professor's word for it. He is teaching you what he believes. For me, creationism gives another way of interpreting the data in the rocks.

Many secular scientists of the past have left God out of the picture. Today this is not always the case. When I was recently taking a science class, I had to report on the Big Bang Theory. The information that I found from before 1990 did not take into account the "God issue." After 1990, the information that I found had a small paragraph, whereas after 1995 it had a larger paragraph.—*Pat Schosser, Burnsville, N.C.*

Constitutional challenge

I detest paying taxes to the military as much as anybody. However, I have some serious questions about the Peace Tax Fund bill. The most fundamental question is how would the fund affect social spending on the federal level. There already has been talk that such spending might not withstand a constitutional challenge.

This talk was spurred by a Supreme Court ruling that stated that the powers of Congress are specifically enumerated in the Constitution, which means that any power not enumerated is not constitutional. Social spending is not enumerated as such.

For the same reasons that Congress cannot presumably do social spending, can Congress exempt money from the military budget to be spent otherwise?

As profound as I think the Constitution is, I am no great lover of it. However, if someone is going to push for a law to be passed, it should be fundamentally sound. In our government, it is not enough for a law to be a good law; it must also be a sound law.—*Phil Fuller, St. Paul, Minn.*

Cover photo by Keri Kauffman

A musical bri

Eastern Mennonite University's Chamber Singers spent their spring break in Cuba.

by Ken Nafziger

What would you have done if just as you were walking out the door to leave for a trip, someone came up to you and said, "Can't we go, too?"

I said, "No, of course, you can't go, too," and was out the door.

This happened last fall, and the people who asked that question were the Eastern Mennonite University Chamber Singers. My destination was Cuba—not the easiest place to take 30 extra people on the spur of the moment. But while I was in Havana, I asked myself why they couldn't come along the next time I came to Cuba (over EMU's spring break). I asked people in Cuba what they thought of the idea. My answers and theirs were all affirmative.

When I returned to EMU and asked for a show of hands indicating interest, most of the choir raised both hands, enthusiastically. In my absence, they had been talking about how they could make this trip happen.

Despite the fact that the distance from the U.S. mainland to Cuba is shorter than from EMU's Harrisonburg, Va., campus to Washington, traveling to Cuba can be a long trip. Outdated U.S. government polices (basically the same since 1959) make for circuitous paths.

Keri Kauffman

If there's one thing I learned in Cuba it's that music can be a bridge between people. Even though we didn't always understand each other's words, and our styles of music may have been different, we could communicate with one another through the common bond of music.*—Jen Bowman*

First is the matter of permission (though most U.S. citizens go without it). For some places in the world, permission from the State Department is needed. But for Cuba you need a "license" from the Treasury Department. You cannot purchase airline tickets to Cuba from a U.S. travel agent, cannot use credit cards there drawn on U.S. banks, cannot use U.S. travelers' checks, cannot use an ATM to get cash.

All this and more are the direct results of the U.S. economic blockade of Cuba, a blockade that also keeps food, medicines, technology and a host of other things from falling into the hands of this supposed enemy. And this is because of the United States' policies; Cuba does nothing to make travel from here to there difficult or inconvenient.

Nevertheless, within a week after the second semester began, every one of the 33 Chamber Singers had committed to making the trip.

What changed my mind about taking the choir to Cuba? First, the strange status the United States accords Cuba will not last forever. These students will live, eventually, with a changed relationship between the countries. They will be better off knowing something about Cuba firsthand than muddling along with the standard ignorance of and misinformation about the country, the people and the culture.

Second, on my first trip to Cuba in March 1999 and on subsequent trips, I came away impressed with much:

- Government policies, even ones that seriously affect daily life (like the embargo), need not stand in the way of friendship. Not once did any Cuban ever make me feel guilty for my government's actions toward them. And on my visit after Elián Gonzalez's rescue from the ocean, no one ever held me responsible—though they had lots of questions about the workings of our legal system.
- Cuba is poor in things and rich in soul. (You can see some of this in a movie called *The Buena Vista Social Club*, which ought to be required viewing for North Americans.)
- Cubans are gracious and hospitable. On one of my visits, within about 45 minutes of meeting a conductor for the first time, he invited me to guest conduct a concert with one of Cuba's leading orchestras. On another occasion, ensembles met to play just for me—I was their only audience. I'm afraid we in the United States are not so generous with our time and hospitality.
- Cubans are hungry for communication with their North American counterparts.
- Music is everywhere. It seems to emerge from the souls of those who sing and play. And that music inhabits the human body, just as the breath or the touch of a player inhabits an instrument.

Did I have any fears about taking the Chamber Singers to Cuba? Of course. My fears, however,

dge to Cuba

were not for how we'd be received by the Cubans.

- I feared I might have "read" Cuba incorrectly. But I hadn't.
- I feared that with such a short visit, it wouldn't be possible for the group to become comfortable enough to be attentive to Cuba and Cubans. But the students were attentive, and they "got" Cuba.
- I also feared that the diet of misinformation we have been fed about Cuba would be so ingrained in the singers' minds that one week in Cuba might not be long enough to bring them some balance and truthfulness. But they all sensed this quickly. If any good comes from the saga of Elián Gonzalez, it will be that we will converse with Cuba to find out what's going on there rather than taking directions from the loud voices in Miami, their conservative congressional allies or presidential candidates seeking Florida's 25 electoral votes.

The trip to Cuba was not a typical choir tour. I wish tours here could be more like this one: fewer miles traveled, more joint activities with the hosts, more opportunities to delight in the hospitality. Here is a rough summary of our week:

Tuesday: A warm reception by the people at Hostal Valencia, where we stayed during the week. In the evening, we walked a few blocks to meet with a Cuban chamber choir, Vocal Leo, who sang for us, and we sang for them.

Wednesday: A trip to Varadero and meetings with Rev. Arce, a retired Presbyterian minister and member of the Cuban Parliament, a meeting with the Chamber Choir of Matanzas (hearing them and singing for them in the Chapel of the Seminary in Matanzas), and attending the concert I conducted with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Matanzas.

Thursday: A joint concert on the University of Havana campus with three Cuban choirs. That concert ended with all the choirs and the audience singing together a glorious improvisation on the spiritual "Come and Go With Me to That Land."

Friday: This day included some quiet time and a colorful vegetarian lunch in the Botanical Gardens of Havana. The afternoon rehearsal was interrupted by a quick cross-town trip to meet with Vocal Sampling, a group of six Cuban men who sang for us. We sang for them.

Saturday: The one long rehearsal of the week, then free time.

Sunday: The choir sang for the morning worship service at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Havana. The pastor, Raul Suarez, is the founder and director of the Martin Luther

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Keri Kauffman

The Eastern Mennonite University Chamber Singers practice at the Basilica Menor de San Francisco Asís in Havana.

Keri Kauffman

A street scene in Havana.

My memory? Sitting on that colorful Pastors for Peace bus, seeing countryside, dilapidated apartment buildings and oil diggers whiz by the window to the sound of the bus horn and the Bee Gees' "Stayin' Alive" blaring from the speakers.—*Keri Kauffman*

A musical bridge
continued from page 5

King Center, which hosted our time in Cuba. Rev. Suarez is also an elected member of the Cuban Parliament. The center is where EMU graduate student Willroy Grant works as a Mennonite Central Committee volunteer. He traveled with us as friend, translator and tour guide. In the evening, we sang our only full concert in Havana, at the Basilica Menor de San Francisco Asís, one of Havana's major concert venues. A large, enthusiastic crowd attended.

Monday: Camarata Romeu, a string chamber orchestra of eight women, played a short concert for us. The rest of this last day included packing to leave, last-minute things to do, farewells to say and the ride to José Marti International Airport to fly to Toronto (since Canada allows flights to and from Cuba).

Our hosts at the hotel were a prime example of the hospitality we experienced in Cuba. Perhaps the most beautiful moment happened as I approached one of the managers on our last day to say goodbye. He looked me in the eyes and said 'my friend' and hugged me.—*Mark Schoenhals*

In addition to the choirs with whom we sang, the Chamber Singers also got to know María Felicia Pérez, conductor of the world-famous Exaudi. They worked with José María Vitier, Cuban composer and pianist, who accompanied them in the concert in their performance of "Laudamus Te" from his Misa Cubana. He also improvised a prelude to that piece. They worked with Alina Oracca, conductor of Coralina, who made them sound more Cuban. And they sang "Padre Nuestro" by Samuel Hernandez Duménigo, with the composer conducting, at the University of Havana concert.

What did I get for changing my mind and taking 33 singers with me to Cuba?

- Thirty-three better informed citizens of the world.
- An opportunity to meet many friends in Cuba and make music together.
- New friends, especially Samuel Hernandez Duménigo, a modest man I met on the street late one night and convinced to conduct the next day's performance of "Padre Nuestro." He said he'd never felt so much like a musician as he had in meeting the EMU Chamber Singers and spending time with us.
- The awesome recognition once again that God's work will never be destroyed, not even by the misguided policies of powers and principalities.
- The experience of walking joyously, with open arms, across a bridge that had been built in earlier visits, and the pleasure of finding that at least 33 other people could walk there with me.
- Many gifts of the Spirit that I sensed there, which will become even more apparent to me in the days and years to come.

A few weeks after we returned, I talked with a professional pianist from New York who is of Cuban descent. She was interested in the trip I had just completed. At the end of her remarks she said: "On behalf of all of us who can't do what you're doing for communications between Cubans and North Americans, we all thank you. Please don't stop."

Ken Nafziger is professor of music and director of the Chamber Singers at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.

Lessons from the Cuban church

Reflections from a 10-day trip to Cuba in May

by Elizabeth Raid

When I visited Cuba in May, I experienced a vibrant, living church, one whose energy and vision is absorbed in active ministry. The church in Cuba manifests a vitality of spirit and a community outreach we could use as an example to follow.

I went to Cuba to experience it for myself—to see, taste, feel and better understand this country, which, with a high literacy rate and a low infant mortality rate, remains a mystery to most Americans. During my 10-day visit, I witnessed a country where people had enough of life's necessities—food, housing, education, health care—along with the essentials of life—loving, caring, helpful people.

I did not see malnourished children or overweight mothers; I saw no starving beggars, no fast-food establishments, no movie theaters or shopping malls. Instead of window bars to keep people out, rocking chairs for neighborly conversations lined the porches of every rural home. Children at the schools my group visited and to which we donated supplies appeared content and attentive.

Common notions of communist oppression of religion and freedom of speech are myths of the past. People there spoke freely of their faith and acted on it. The Pope's 1998 visit provided the impetus for changing relationships between church and state. Our host at University Methodist Church told of 19 evangelistic campaigns and more being planned—all sanctioned and aided by the government. In July, the Baptists held their first public rallies in 41 years (see "Wider World," July 25).

I traveled there with Neighbors East and West to distribute medical and school supplies and to learn firsthand about life there.

Our group of 22 also met with church leaders. I asked Daisy, one of the leaders at the Martin Luther King Center in Havana, about the leadership role of women in her congregation.

Her response surprised me. "In the 1990s," she said, "we began addressing the problems of justice for women. We women demanded that patriarchal systems and male inclusive language give way to women in leadership and use of female God language."

The Methodist pastor responded with a chuckle: "We didn't let the women get their way on using only female God language. Now we use 'God, Father and Mother.' Men and women are both victims of a system of domination, and we need to oppose this system. We honor and value theology from the women."

He showed a warm, caring attitude toward us, in spite of his wife's illness and death several years earlier due to the lack of medicine.

My adequate Spanish allowed me to visit with common people in their homes, churches, taxis, shops and on the street. I heard these comments (among others):

- "I am a Christian. I am not a communist, but I love my country."
- "I am a communist because I believe that the government and people need to work together for the common good."
- "As a people, we want to govern ourselves as we choose. We don't want to live in fear of being swallowed by the giant to the north."
- "Why is the United States opening trade with China and North Korea and ignoring the potential for economic development so close to home?"
- "Ending the embargo would cause us [Cubans] to face up to our problems and take away our reason for blame."

I met with Willroy Alexander Grant, a Mennonite Central Committee worker from Costa Rica and a graduate of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. He works with the youth in the church and community, using drama, dance and music.

As I reflect on how I experienced God at work in Cuba and recognize the common challenges we as a church in the United States face, I wonder how we might learn lessons of working together as God's people for the common good and of extending Christ's love by meeting people where they are.

Although our living conditions, our economic or educational opportunities may vary, we each carry the light of Christ within us and are joined in God's love. Together we can respond to those around us, knowing that we are all part of God's circle of love around the world.

Elizabeth Raid is a seminary student in Richmond, Ind.

Although our living conditions, our economic or educational opportunities may vary, we each carry the light of Christ within us and are joined in God's love.

Creating leaders, creating community

Hispanic program observes more than a decade of work

For more than a decade, a unique program has been providing theological education for Hispanic Anabaptist leaders. But it has also strengthened church and community ties.

The Instituto Biblico Anabautista (IBA) or Anabaptist Biblical Institute began in 1989 with one student in Virginia Beach, Va. Since then, more than 500 students have taken at least one class, strengthening the ministries of current pastors and producing Sunday school teachers, women's group and Bible study leaders, church planters and even new pastors, says Gilberto Flores, director of Hispanic Ministries of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM).

GCMC photo by Melanie Zuercher

Byron Pellecer of Miami holds a piñata during the 10th anniversary celebration of the Instituto Biblico Anabautista, held Sept. 1-3 in Hesston, Kan. More than 500 students have taken IBA courses since its inception.

"IBA has become a link between [Hispanic] churches," he says. "The friendships extend throughout the church. I think the most significant thing about IBA is building that good sense of community."

CHM executive secretary Lois Barrett agrees. "On an individual level, a lot of men and women are getting the training they need for church leadership," she says. "On a denominational level, IBA has helped these congregations feel more included in the Mennonite church."

IBA's roots go back to 1988, when Marco Güete, then the Hispanic Ministries director, gathered an advisory committee of Hispanic church leaders to look at ways to address leadership training for those churches. IBA began the next year as a correspondence course. But that required too much time of Hispanic Ministries staff.

So IBA was restructured as a theological education by extension program. Students work through curriculum that requires study and writing at home, then meet once a week with a tutor at a study center, often a church.

There are 17 IBA centers in the United States, with an 18th scheduled to open in Riverside, Calif., this fall. Canada has three centers, with a fourth expected to open in Vancouver soon. In 1995, IBA extended its services to northern Mexico, operating 12 centers with the support of CHM, Commission on Overseas Mission and Pacific Northwest Conference. Students come from General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, even Mennonite Brethren and other-than-Anabaptist congregations.

IBA's curriculum began as loose-leaf pages from advisory committee-approved books that could be easily mailed back by students studying through correspondence. The curriculum now includes four Spanish-language books on such subjects as Anabaptist history and theology and the Old and New Testaments. The books were developed by IBA, with Mennonite scholars commissioned to write them.

IBA published the books in cooperation with SEMILLA, the Anabaptist seminary in Guatemala City, and CLARA, the Anabaptist resource center for Latin America located in Bogotá, Colombia. SEMILLA and CLARA also distribute the material for use in Latin America.

Students are required to take an intensive 2½-day seminar, taught by Flores, who began as Hispanic Ministries director in 1996, coming from SEMILLA, where he served as its first academic dean.

Students who want to graduate from the program must also attend the annual student retreat, held in two locations each year. One retreat took place Sept. 1-3 at Cross Wind Conference Center near Hesston, Kan., to celebrate IBA's 10th anniversary, albeit a year late.

Violeta Ajquejay has been Hispanic Ministries administrative assistant during most of IBA's existence and serves as the institute's associate director. She has seen leaders emerge across North America as a result of the institute. "A woman in California who is a strong leader has gotten more training and education and is now thinking of pastoral ministry," Ajquejay says.

She tells of Byron Guzman, who came from Comunidad de Fe, a Mennonite church in Chicago, to study with IBA. "After being in the institute, he decided he wanted to be a pastor," Ajquejay says. "He went to the pastoral ministries program at Hesston (Kan.) College and is now the Spanish pastor at Grace Mennonite Church [in Lansdale, Pa.]."

As IBA looks toward its next 10 years, Flores wants to form another advisory committee to help shape the direction the institute could take in the future. "We would like to see the institute move toward something that gives the students more chances to meet and talk together," he says, "to create a hermeneutical circle, to move from repetition to reflection."
—Melanie Zuercher of GCMC News Service

By focusing on indigenous churches, mission work in Argentine Chaco helps preserve native culture

ELKHART, Ind.—After 57 years of mission work in northern Argentina, there are no Mennonite churches in the Chaco region. Nor do the Mennonite mission workers try to plant them.

Instead, the Chaco team supports indigenous churches by advocating for worship that reflects the local culture, including the use of Scripture and music in native languages. By doing so, the church is actually helping the culture survive, say Gretchen and Keith Kingsley, Commission on Overseas Mission-Mennonite Board of Missions workers who have served with the Chaco's Toba people since 1997.

"There is a sense that the Toba culture is most alive in Toba worship, through Scripture, music and memory," Gretchen says. "Without the active life of the church, the culture would be much more fragile."

Toba worship includes singing and dancing, prayers, Scripture reading and preaching. Each visitor is called on to speak to the congregation. Services typically last for hours, regardless of the heat or mosquitoes. "The important thing is that you're together and around the Word of God," Keith says.

Mennonite Board of Missions first sent workers to work with the Toba in northern Argentina in 1943. By the mid-1950s, MBM's ministry to the Toba shifted from planting churches to helping local leaders and existing indigenous churches. Since then, MBM's work in northern Argentina has focused on accompanying these home-grown churches through leadership development, Bible translation, Bible teaching and encouraging worship styles that reflect native culture. In 1960, 28 congregations came together to found the Iglesia Evangélica Unida (United Evangelical Church). About 100 congregations make Iglesia Evangélica Unida the largest indigenous denomination in Argentina.

"The major part of our work is walking alongside the Toba people, valuing them through our presence," Gretchen says.

Adds Keith: "We're trying to acknowledge what's going on. We want to give encouragement and let God be the leader.

"I came to the realization that throughout [our region], there are churches that are independent, self-governing churches … pastored by native people. It's incredible to realize that every Indian community in this region depends on these … churches. They are the only institution in Indian society that is autonomous."

The Kingsleys serve in Argentina as part of a multicultural team representing Germany, Argentina and the United States. Despite their cultural differences, Keith says, "We are held together by Jesus Christ and by our commitment to accompany the Toba people and encourage Bible study and Bible translation."

Gretchen and Keith Kingsley

In addition to work with native churches, the team also advocates for recognition of aboriginal land rights.

Two members of the Chaco team, Luis Acosta and Frank Paul, work with a translation team formed in June to complete the translation of the Bible into the Toba language. With the help of Toba assistants, Albert and Lois Buckwalter, MBM Argentina workers from 1950 to 1993, prepared the first Toba translation of the New Testament and a shortened version of the Old Testament.—*Bethany Swope of GCMC and MBM news services*

June Krehbiel

Hungering for knowledge

Left to right: Kate Becker, freshman from Newton, Kan.; Erin Schmidt, sophomore from Newton; and Lisa Thimm, senior from Beatrice, Neb., fill their plates at Bethel College's all-school picnic on Aug. 29, which was the first day of classes for the North Newton, Kan., school. Bluffton (Ohio) College also started school on Aug. 29. Hesston (Kan.) College began on Aug. 28, while Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., and Goshen (Ind.) College held their first day of classes on Aug. 30.

MBM assignment was plain garbage

When Rachel Kauffman returned to the United States this summer after her Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) internship in Benin, she made sure there was as little trash as possible left behind.

During her 10 months in the city of Cotonou, Kauffman served with DCAM, a Protestant development organization that tackles problems of hygiene and nutrition. Kauffman prepared a study of one community's garbage-collection system. Since there is little garbage collection by the government, DCAM started the program to fight disease.

After the program was turned over to local entrepreneurs, Kauffman assisted by interviewing subscribers and workers, gathering and analyzing data and encouraging accurate record keeping.—*MBM News Service*

Program to promote ecumenical pacifism

The Mennonites, Brethren and Quakers are known as peace churches. But John Stoner thinks that is a label that should apply to all Christians.

Stoner, of Akron, Pa., is coordinator of New Call to Peacemaking, a Mennonite, Brethren and Quaker initiative, which is embarking on a program to encourage the peace position across denominational lines. Called Every Church a Peace Church, the program's goal is to provide materials for use by congregations and peace groups. Resources could include books, videos and discussion guides.

Plans are still in their infancy. A May meeting provided a forum for discussion on how every church might be a peace church. Now a New Call to Peacemaking steering committee is seeking to hold conversations with representatives from other groups, such as Baptist Peace Fellowship, Lutheran Peace Fellowship and the Catholic Pax Christi.

The project will be funded by donations and grants, Stoner says. Two grants have already been secured, one which will cover the costs of video production and duplication.—*Reuben Miller*

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MCC representatives get glimpse of Burma

AKRON, Pa.—Seminaries and soccer are two key elements of the Christian church's presence in Burma, says a U.S. Mennonite pastor recently returned from a monthlong seminar on the church in that country, held in Rangoon.

Mennonite Central Committee sponsored Earl Zimmerman, pastor at Shalom Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Va., and Pastor Romero, a Belizean studying at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

Burma is mired in a 50-year civil war. All the country's universities have been closed since 1996 due to repeated student uprisings. But Zimmerman reports that the seminaries "are full and growing."

"They provide the only education available aside from military training," Zimmerman says. "Education for youth is clearly one of the primary goals of the churches."

Seminar participants met with a church-organized soccer league. Such activities function to involve young adults who are unable to further their education and who have few employment opportunities, Zimmerman says.

The seminar addressed the importance of interreligious dialogue. "It is in the interest of the military junta to keep Buddhists and Christians divided," Zimmerman says.—*MCC News Service*

MCC petitions U.N. against Iraqi sanctions

WINNIPEG—Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) United Nations office is marking the 10th anniversary of sanctions against Iraq by urging the U.N. Security Council to address the civilian tragedy facing that country.

In a letter dated Aug. 2, MCC and five other members of the Iraq Working Group of Nongovernmental Organizations wrote: "The deterioration of Iraq's civilian infrastructure is so far-reaching that it can only be reversed with extensive investment and development efforts. … The council must recognize that the sanctions have contributed in a major way to persistent life-threating conditions in the country."

The sanctions were imposed following Iraq's 1990 invasion of neighboring Kuwait.

"Finally people are admitting that the crises of ordinary people in Iraq go well beyond providing minimal nourishment for individuals," says John Rempel, MCC's U.N. liaison.—*MCC News Service*

Rejoice! editor announces resignation

NEWTON, Kan.—Philip Wiebe, editor of *Rejoice!* devotional magazine since 1994, has announced his resignation, effective Nov. 30. He has accepted a position as editor for the Oregon State Archive.

Rejoice! is a cooperative effort of Faith & Life Press (General Conference Mennonite Church), Herald Press (Mennonite Church) and Kindred Productions (Mennonite Brethren).

EMM summer program draws 300 participants

SALUNGA, Pa.—More than 300 young people from 18 youth groups and schools this summer participated in Eastern Mennonite Missions K-Teams, two- to five-day programs of discipleship training, ministry and service.

K-Team locations were Baltimore; Harrisburg, Pa.; and Queens, N.Y. Activities included operating prayer stations on city sidewalks and assisting with inner-city ministries.—*EMM News Service*

by the way …

The first Mennonite congregation to have a pipe organ was in Hamburg, Germany, in 1764.—*Mennonite Life*

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Events

Providence Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va., centennial celebration, Oct. 7-8. Contact 757-249-2702 or <pmcnn@aol.com>.

First Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind., 125th anniversary, Oct. 15. Worship, potluck, sharing. Contact Nancy Miller, 952 E. John St., Nappanee, IN 46550.

Atlantic Coast Conference annual meeting, Oct. 27-29, Lancaster, Pa.

Evangelism storytelling festival, Hesston (Kan.) College, Oct. 27-29. Contact Palmer Becker, 316-327-8295 or <palmerb@hesston.edu>.

Mennonite Disaster Service Region III meeting, Nov. 10-11, Freeman, S.D. Contact Vernon Miller, 316-662-1584.

First Mennonite Church, San Francisco, 25th anniversary, Nov. 12. Worship and fellowship meal. Contact John Flickinger, 415-695-2812 or <fmcsf@menno.org>.

Workers

Beachy, Dan and Tina, have begun a one-year Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM) assignment at Maranatha School for the Deaf in Jamaica.

Brubaker, Beryl H., has begun as provost at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, Va.

Friesen, Allan and Maryvel, have concluded their term of service with the Commission on Overseas Mission (COM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) in Paraguay.

Friesen, Carinna, Saskatoon, has begun a one-year term with COM and Africa Inter-Mennonite Mission in Burkina Faso.

Gerber, Rachel, was licensed Sept. 3 for pastoral care and Christian education at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Morris, Marie S., has begun as undergraduate academic dean at EMU.

Moyer, Earl and Kathy, have begun a one-year VMBM assignment at Maranatha School for the Deaf in Jamaica.

Sherrill, Mike and Teresa, Pasadena, Calif., have begun a term in Tokyo with COM and MBM.

Smyser, Marty, has begun as pastor at Cornerstone Mennonite Church, Hannibal, Mo.

Weaver, Chris, has begun as associate pastor at Bethel Mennonite Church, Inman, Kan.

Yoder, Karen and Tom, have returned from VMBM assignments in Tirana, Albania.

Births

Brubaker, Scout Malone, Aug. 2, to Lynn (Borntreger) and Martin Brubaker, Goshen, Ind.

Graber, Julius Christian, July 27, to Jessica (Schlabach) and Joel Graber, Goshen, Ind.

Hammer, Nathan Jon, Aug. 16, to Jolene (Myers) and Jon Hammer, Allentown, Pa.

Helmuth, Lainey Marie, Aug. 9, to Lisa (Mullett) and Todd Helmuth, Sarasota, Fla.

Kauffman, Marli Jo, Aug. 14, to Andrew and Brenda (Bennett) Kauffman, Canby, Ore.

Kehl, Rachel Heather, Aug. 18, to Heather (Hover) and Roger Kehl, New Hamburg, Ont.

Layton, Anna Elisabeth, Aug. 17, to Brenda (Early) and Bryan Layton, Harrisonburg, Va.

Martin, Anita Rose, Aug. 9, to Grant and Janelle (Nofziger) Martin, Goshen, Ind.

McFarland, Daniel Fabry, Aug. 1, to David and Laura (Cable) McFarland, Roaring Springs, Pa.

Miller, Arin Nikole, July 7, to Curtis and Sarah (Miller) Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Kelsey Olivia, Aug. 12, to Jason and Kimberly (Mengel) Miller, Millersburg, Ohio.

Oakes, Tristan Wade, Aug. 17, to Kristin (Kauffman) and Roger Oakes, Molalla, Ore.

Troyer, Paul Joseph, Aug. 16, to Angie (Wise) and Anthony Troyer, Hartville, Ohio.

Marriages

Bachman/Creech: Brandon Bachman, Wayland, Iowa, and Amanda Creech, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, Aug. 12 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Baughman/Orosz: Lisa Jean Baughman, Bloomfield, Iowa, and Michael Orosz, Colorado Springs, Colo., Aug. 5 at Point of Grace Church, West Des Moines, Iowa.

Brooks/Kupeerus: Nicki Brooks, Goshen, Ind., and Jeremy Kupeerus, New Paris, Ind., July 29 at Walnut Hill Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Cupler/Indrisano: Susan Cupler, Grantsville, Md., and Greg Indrisano, Pittsburgh, Aug. 5.

Denny/Stice: Wendy Denny, Colorado Springs, Colo., and Wayne Stice, Colorado Springs, July 22 at Colorado Springs.

Engbrecht/Kliewer: John Engbrecht, Fairfield, Iowa, and Brooke Kliewer, Crawfordsville, Iowa, Aug. 5 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa.

Flowers/Slusser: Beth Ann Flowers, Mount Carmel, Pa., and Dean Slusser, Milton, Pa., Aug. 19 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

Harasymchuk/Schroeder: Kevin Harasymchuk, Steinbach, Man., and Leane Schroeder, Steinbach, Aug. 8.

Heatwole/Kirkendall: Shelly Heatwole, Goshen, Ind., and Bradley Kirkendall, Indianapolis, Aug. 12 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Heiland/Roth: Alicia Heiland, Panora, Iowa, and Landon Roth, Wayland, Iowa, July 15 at First Christian Church, Panora.

Lasure/Schrock: Eric Lasure, Boswell, Pa., and Tammie Schrock, Somerset, Pa., Aug. 12 at Thomas Mennonite Church, Hollsopple, Pa.

Leatherman/Wilt: Dereck Leatherman, Wauseon, Ohio, and Mindi Wilt, Upland, Ind., Aug. 5 at Pettisville Missionary Church, Wauseon.

Miller/Pancake: Matthew Miller, Goshen, Ind., and Amanda Pancake, Auburn, Ind., Aug. 12 at Calvary Chapel, Auburn.

Miller/Riegsecker: Kevin Miller, Middlebury, Ind., and Jennifer Riegsecker, Middlebury, July 29 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Reimer/Schmidt: Christina Reimer, Waterloo, Ont., and Mike Schmidt, Goessel, Kan., Aug. 12 at Waterloo-Kitchener United Mennonite Church.

Souder/Storms: Christopher Souder, Pueblo, Colo., and Mandy Storms, Williamsport, Pa., July 22 at Williamsport.

Deaths

Amstutz, Edith, 73, Orrville, Ohio, died Aug. 14 of heart failure. Parents: Gideon and Caroline Amstutz Amstutz (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 18 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Bartel, Dora Ewert, 89, Hillsboro, Kan., died July 24. Spouse: Henry Bartel (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Minnie Goertz Ewert (deceased). Survivors: children Dean, Marvin, Floyd; seven grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 29 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Beiler, Ruth Beachy, 85, Grantsville, Md., died Aug. 15. Spouse: Melvin Beiler (deceased). Parents: Moses and Lucy Miller Beachy (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Lucy Ellen Bender, Daisy Townsend, Judy Mayhill, Ruth Ann Yoder, Larry; 14 grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Springs, Pa.

Bergey, Willard, 87, Sellersville, Pa., died Aug. 12. Spouse: Anna Clemmer Bergey. Parents: Horace and Esther Bergey (deceased). Other survivors: children Robert, Harold, Willard, Philip, Janet Frederick, Joan Myers; 19 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 15 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Buckwalter, Paul Neff, 86, Lititz, Pa., died Aug. 10. Spouse: Ethel Charles Buckwalter. Parents: Frank and Ada Neff Buckwalter (deceased). Other survivors: children Lois Harnish, Doris Nolt; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 15 at Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Greiser, David Sr., 77, Hatfield, Pa., died Aug. 15. Spouse: Mary Greiser. Other survivors: children David Jr., Wendy Levin, Bonnie Kus; six grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

Harshbarger, Mary Eva, 90, West Liberty, Ohio, died Aug. 11. Parents: Samuel and Edith Yoder Harshbarger (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 16 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

Heimberger, Dale, 54, Navarre, Ohio, died July 9 of a heart attack. Spouse: Alice Killinger Heimberger. Other survivors: children Paul, Janelle, Jeff. Funeral: July 12 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

King, Mary, 92, Kalona, Iowa, died Aug. 16. Parents: David and Hettie Yoder King (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 19 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Miller, Christine Oakes, 88, Hesston, Kan., died Aug. 15. Spouse: Edmund Miller (deceased). Parents: John and Bertha Halstead Oakes (deceased). Survivors: son Jon; one grandchild; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Miller, Daniel, 86, Bunker Hill, Ind., died Aug. 2. Spouse: Edna Yoder Miller. Parents: Eli and Katie Hershberger Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Alma, Mary Lawrence, Verba Engel, Wayne, Larry; 13 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 6 at Howard-Miami Mennonite Church, Kokomo, Ind.

Miller, Jenessa, 21, Middlebury, Ind., died Aug. 8 from injuries in a car accident. Parents: Gerald and Danette Frye Miller. Grandparents: George and Emma Miller, Lee and Etta Miller. Funeral: Aug. 11 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Rittenhouse, Donald, 43, Mount Pleasant, Pa., died July 28 from injuries in a car accident. Spouse: Jane Birky Rittenhouse. Parents: Henry and Beulah Hendricks Rittenhouse. Other survivors: children Leah, Krista. Funeral: Aug. 1 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant.

Yoder, Barbara Weirich, 63, Goshen, Ind., died July 31. Spouse: Harley Yoder. Parents: Joni and Anna Mast Weirich (deceased). Other survivors: children Dewayne, Sherry Faulkner, Sandra Snider; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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  Country director, Jakarta, Indonesia: This job, which could be shared, involves leading the planning and budgeting process for the 25-member MCC team, living in six different locations. Current programs include rural community development, university teaching, church relations and conflict mediation and peace building. The director(s) will also have the opportunity to learn to know and work closely with some of the 75,000 Mennonites who call this tropical archipelago home. Four to six months of language study would be provided.

  Country representative, El Salvador: Doing this job involves working with an experienced, committed MCC team, community and church leaders to discern new ways to do God's will in El Salvador, an ever-changing country that is slowly building a culture of reconciliation and peace after more than a decade of war. Key qualifications: Spanish language proficiency and team facilitation skills.

  To learn more about these two jobs, or other leadership roles within MCC, contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151; <cdb@mail.mcc.org>.

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- **Eden Health Care Services** seeks ***CEO***. EHCS, centered in Winkler, Man., is owned by Manitoba Mennonite conferences and churches. It provides acute and community mental health and wellness programs in collaboration with our faith constituencies, local communities and the regional and provincial health authorities. It has 135 employees and a cumulative budget approaching $8 million. The candidate should be a visionary and strategic leader, planner and team builder capable of supervising and directing all aspects of a group of faith-based mental health, residential, training, employment, counseling, wellness and industry programs. An understanding and affirmation of Anabaptist faith and values, health-care management experience and public relations skills will be assets.

  Submit resumes by Oct. 2, 2000, to Tim Stair, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; <info@mhsonline.org>; or to Harry Wiens, Eden Health Care Services, Box 1120, Altona, MB R0G 0B0; fax 204-324-1275; <hjwiens@mb.sympatico.ca>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks ***vice president for enrollment and marketing***. 12-month, full-time position. Doctoral degree preferred, master's degree required. Higher education administration, supervision, marketing or advertising, teaching, communications (public media, public relations or journalism) experience is desirable. Responsible for supervision of the following positions: directors of admissions for the undergraduate, seminary and graduate programs; director of financial assistance; and director of communications. Responsible for coordinating retention activities, integrated market planning as it relates to recruitment and retention, discerning the market place for EMU programs, and educating and motivating all people at EMU concerning the importance of their role in student recruitment, retention and communicating the EMU story. Application review begins immediately and will continue until position is filled. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply.

  Contact Joseph L. Lapp, President, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4100; <lappj@emu.edu>; or visit our web site <www.emu.edu>. Eastern Mennonite University complies with federal and state requirements for nondiscrimination in employment with regard to gender, age, race, color, handicap, national and ethnic origin.

- **Providence College and Theological Seminary** is seeking applications for the ***Office of President***. Providence is an interdenominational evangelical institution located in Otterburne, Man., 30 minutes south of Winnipeg. Current enrollment is 650 full-time equivalent with 7% growth during each of the past five years. Providence programs include theology, liberal arts, sports, music and drama.

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  Interested applicants should submit a curriculum vitae in confidence to Presidential Search, Don Streuber, Chairman, Providence College, Otterburne, MB R0A 1G0; <presidentialsearch@providence.mb.ca>. Deadline for applications is Nov. 10, 2000. Duties will begin in spring or summer of 2001.

by Gordon Houser

A list of books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

A Separate People: An Insider's View of Old Order Mennonite Customs and Traditions by Isaac R. Horst (Herald Press, 2000, $13.99) uses a tour of Mennonites in Ontario to show how and why Old Order Mennonites live a separate life.

<*www.ResourcingChristianity.org*> seeks to assist leaders and participants in Christian communities, plus scholars and other interested people to better understand the impact and trends of Christianity in American society by providing information and reflection on selected projects funded by Lilly Endowment Inc.

Running With Jesus: The Prayers of Malcolm Boyd by Malcolm Boyd (Augsburg Fortress, 2000, $15.99) is a collection of prayers by the Episcopal priest and poet on issues from gritty urban life to sexuality and prayers of joy for simple pleasures.

The Story of Ruth: Twelve Moments in Every Woman's Life by Joan D. Chittister, with art by John August Swanson (Eerdmans, 2000, $28), uses complementary texts and illustrations to explore 12 defining moments in every woman's life: loss, change, transformation, aging, independence, respect, recognition, insight, empowerment, self-definition, invisibility and fulfillment.

Take the Plunge: Journey Into Prayer by Brad Huebert (Kindred Productions, 2000, $5.95) is a devotional, geared to youth, reflecting on the Lord's Prayer.

Mediation and Facilitation Training Manual: Foundation and Skills for Constructive Conflict Transformation, edited by Carolyn Schrock-Shenk (Mennonite Central Committee, 2000, $33) is in its fourth edition and contains 74 new articles and expanded sections on power, restorative justice, culture, systems and pedagogy. Order from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17502, <MCCResources@mcc.org>.

<*www.spirithome.com*> contains more than 90 web pages on discernment, history, prayer, early church theology, gifts, Bible use, mysteries, suffering, spiritual experiences, health and healing, worship, congregational life and public aspects of spirituality. It also includes study questions, quotes, orders of worship, lyrics, challenges, tests and message boards.

El Poder del Cielo se Manifiesta: Estudios en el Evangelio de Marcos and *Sus lamentos llegaron al cielo: Estudios en Exodo* (Faith & Life Press, 2000, $2.95 each) are the first two Spanish translations of the Good Ground ("Buena Tierra") Bible study series. The interactive Bible study series for adults offers 18 units in English. To order call 800-743-2484.

Seasons of Goodbye: Working Your Way Through Loss by Chris Ann Waters (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $11.95) guides readers through the natural cycle of goodbye: autumn representing the pivotal point of change, winter a time of getting still and introspective, spring a time for regaining hope and letting go, summer a time of participating again in life with acceptance, peace and new purpose.

By Faith They Went Out: Mennonite Missions, 1850-1999 by Wilbert R. Shenk (Institute of Mennonite Studies, 2000, $15 plus $3 shipping) traces the mission impulse of early Anabaptism and documents the impact of subsequent developments, from persecution and withdrawal through Pietist and evangelical revival to the globalization of the church in the 20th century.

Women Who Minister to Women is a free online magazine by Linda Evans Shepherd that encourages, inspires and offers tips and helps to women leaders who minister to women. Order from <RightToTheHeart@aol.com>.

Recommended reading

Desire of the Everlasting Hills: The World Before and After Jesus **by Thomas Cahill (Doubleday, 1999, $24.95) is part of Cahill's Hinges of History Series, which looks at people and movements that had a major impact on the Western world. Cahill is the best kind of popular writer: He communicates clearly and in an engaging style, yet he handles the scholarly literature with aplomb. He strikes a healthy balance between reverence and skepticism. He treats the New Testament as literature with human features, yet he calmly acknowledges the believability of Jesus' miracles and the Resurrection. Cahill makes reading history a joy.—*gh***

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Marla J. Cole

Simple lessons

My family has moved a lot in the past few months. In the midst of all this and numerous other challenges, we found ourselves wondering what God was trying to teach us through the adversity we were facing.

I have to admit that my faith that God would take care of us wavered from time to time. In fact, in the beginning, we didn't look to God at all. We were so consumed with worry that we didn't take the time to step back, talk to God and wait for an answer. Instead we made a quick decision about what to do, relying solely on what we thought would be best for us. After our approach didn't work out, we realized what we had done and looked to God. Then things began to fall into place. Why didn't we look to God immediately and put all our trust there? We were too busy trying to figure out our plight on our own.

The lesson of trusting God may seem simple and one we don't necessarily need to learn. After all, one of the first lessons taught in Christian homes is that through our trust in Jesus our souls are saved. Why then does our trust sometimes falter in our day-to-day lives? Had God ever let us down before? No. Why then didn't we look to God first? And how could we make sure we didn't make the same mistake the next time we were faced with adversity?

It's easy to be mindful and thankful after a particularly trying time. But how many of us thank God when we're in good health, all our bills are paid and our jobs are secure?

The answer lies in Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Before we look anywhere else for answers we are to ask God first and then listen; not just in the face of hardship. We are to be mindful of God in all things. After all, how many of us really think about and thank God for taking care of us when our lives are seemingly problem-free? It's easy to be mindful and thankful after a particularly trying time. But how many of us thank God when we're in good health, all our bills are paid and our jobs are secure?

James 5:13 says: " Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise." The songs of the Psalms aren't just prayers for help, they're prayers to God on a whole range of emotions, such as joy, excitement, grief and fear. By calling upon God only in times of need, aren't we limiting our access to God and therefore keeping God at arm's length?

It seems to be an unfortunate fact that fundamental lessons such as this one sometimes go by the wayside as our lives get busier and issues get larger. It's as if our day-to-day lives have become so large that they eclipse God. And we only think to draw upon the Lord's strength after we stop looking around or inside us for answers. Many times it seems as if we call upon the Lord for strength only in times of need. And, as instructed in Proverbs and elsewhere in the Bible, we are to be mindful of and thankful to God every day for all things.

Once we begin to acknowledge and thank God on a daily basis for all we're provided, it becomes easy to turn things over to him. And when something doesn't work out as we thought it might or should, we know that God has a reason. Putting our complete trust in God is freeing and allows us to grow closer to him.

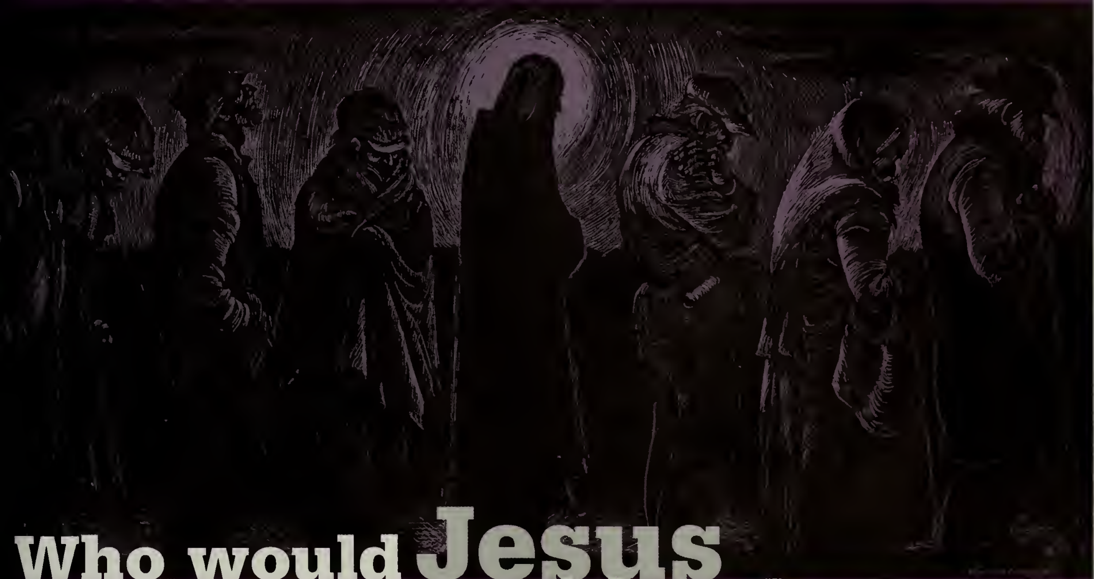
A poem says, "To look around is to be distressed; to look within is to be depressed; to look up is to be blessed." May we all look up daily and remember our simple lessons.—*mjc*

A weekly care package

Summer's over, and most students are back at school. If there's a college or graduate student you didn't know what to give before they packed up, consider a student subscription to *The Mennonite*. For only $18 your student recipient will enjoy reading something weekly that isn't a textbook. The full subscription runs September through April, but we can prorate the cost. To start sending *The Mennonite* to your scholar, call us toll-free at 800-790-2498.—*mjc*

the Mennonite

September 19, 2000



Who would Jesus hang out with today?

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Time to reflect

As a chaplain at a Mennonite retirement community, I greatly enjoyed two wonderful items in the August 15 issue. The poetic piece by Wendy Turner Swanson ("In the Midst of Life") evokes images of life among the elderly or terminally ill. It is a moving tribute to beauty that exists much more deeply than portrayed in magazines or on the silver screen. Shelley Cataldo's article about patience ("Patience, the Endangered Virtue") then invites us to wait for God and to take time to pay attention to God in our daily lives.

I would add one suggestion to Cataldo's helpful list of ways to practice patience. Spend time with the elderly. There is so much to learn among the residents of the various facilities in a continuing-care retirement community. Life moves more slowly when bodies are affected by disease or advanced age and when one is increasingly dependent on others to complete many "simple" daily tasks. The residents at Mennonite Home of Albany have time to reflect on a whole lifetime of seeing God's grace unfold. As they share their stories of faithfulness, my life is greatly enriched, and I am encouraged to pay attention to God's work in my own life.—*Teresa Moser, Albany, Ore.*

In the know

Like Gordon Houser's editorial in the Sept. 5 issue ("Beyond Facts and Magic"), I'm critical of my people, the Mennonites, often enough that it feels good occasionally to come to their defense. Houser wrote that "surveys show … that only 25 percent of Americans can name one of the four Gospels." He fears that Mennonites' Bible knowledge is not much better.

We tested this hunch in the 1972-1988 Church Member Profile Research Project by using an eight-item quiz of Bible knowledge. (See J. Howard Kauffman and Leland Harder, *Anabaptists Four Centuries Later,* 1975, pp. 207ff, and J. Howard Kauffman and Leo Driedger, *The Mennonite Mosaic,* 1991, pp. 74ff.) The test was borrowed from a Methodist survey so we could compare scores. Only 37 percent of the Methodists had half or more of the eight questions right, compared to 88 percent of the Mennonites. The Mennonites had a mean score of 5.7 in 1972 and 5.6 in 1988, leading to the conclusion that Bible knowledge among us has not diminished significantly in recent years.

Mennonites are a very religious people and inclined (as Houser indicated) to be biblicists and literalists in some negative ways. It is hard for most Mennonites to admit that there is any ambiguity in the Bible. Houser quoted the sentence from the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, "All Scripture is inspired by God. … " But is that literally true? I look forward to *The Mennonite*'s new series on difficult texts of the Bible. Arthur Paul Boers' lead-off article ("An Open Letter to My Daughter on the Source of Evil," Sept. 5) was a great beginning.—*Leland Harder, North Newton, Kan.*

On creation

Renita Liechty claims that the earth must be old (Readers Say, Aug. 15). As proof she offers information from a geology class. What must be understood is that the system of geology we have now is based on the premise that large quantities of time must have been needed to bring to us the world and its fossil records. This is, however, an example of circular reasoning. Of course a system founded on the presumption of billions of years is going to prove that same conclusion. Reconstruction is necessary. We have to either reconstruct the Bible to suit our own fallen presumptions or do the painful and lifelong task of reconstructing our worldviews to found them on God's Word. Romans 12:1-3 calls us to the latter.

We can all agree that time is not the same to us as it is to God. God is not part of creation; he is the Creator. We are part of creation just as time is a created thing. Genesis 1:3-5 tells us that time, in the separation of light and dark (24 hours), was the first thing God created. If one believes that these "days" were some sort of extended period, then how could interdependent species have survived? Flowers need pollination and bees need nectar; neither could wait for the billions of years required for this false system to manifest.

The age of the earth is not what is at stake here. It is the question of whether the Bible is God's Word or not. If it is God's word, and he is perfect, then his word must also be perfect (Psalm 119:105). Will we allow the Holy Spirit to light our paths? Or will we continually fail to believe? The usurping of man's common sense and replacing it with God's common sense is exactly what faith is all about.—*Steve Entz, Garland, Texas*

The discussion about the Bible vs. science regarding creation seems to concentrate almost exclusively on the "how" in terms of elapsed time. Maybe we should consider this matter from the position of God's purpose and

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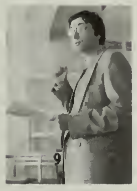
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readers say

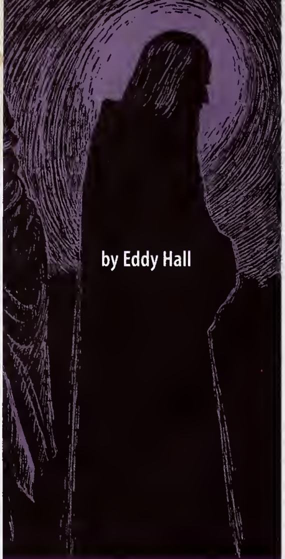
thus not need to force one view over the other.

God could have created a perfect world instantaneously, but instead he chose to create a world with imperfect natural features and creatures with lower orders of intelligence who are allowed to make choices that God does not countermand. We cannot fully understand why this is so, but we can imagine that in God's plan, humans with experience in spiritual development in primitive conditions will be prepared to ultimately play a special role.

We can cherish the poetic narrative in Genesis 1 and, at the same time, respect the paleontological and geological findings of science measuring time in eons. This view would include supernatural forces in the process. We can thus accept that at some point supernatural forces initiated the energy to form the nebula in which our planet exists. After our solar system evolved, life forms could have been implanted supernaturally because our planet had developed favorable conditions for such implanting. As intelligent life evolved—other lands could have been populated besides Nod—Adam and Even could have been supernatural guests to help further the progress of civilization. Although they defaulted in their mission, God did not forsake us but sent prophets and teachers, including Melchizedek, and then, finally, through the mystery of the incarnation, the Creator of our universe came to show us God as our loving parent.

God's purpose, then, would be to prepare us ultimately to become true spiritual beings capable of worshiping God in spirit and in truth, as Christ told the Samaritan woman. This would indicate that in our evolving, imperfect civilization in imperfect physical surroundings, we should consider ourselves only as kindergartners in the school of spiritual development.—*Reynold Sawatsky, Goshen, Ind.*

Cover illustration by Fritz Eichenberg



If sinners were Jesus' friends

Are we more intent on being nice than on being Christlike?

by Eddy Hall

If Jesus lived in North America today, who would be his friends? Who would be his enemies?

The "friends" part of that question should be easy. Jesus would spend most of his time hanging out with us Christians, right? He would be in church every Sunday (in a church of my denomination, most likely), attend the midweek service and serve on two or three committees. He would be the model church member.

Or maybe not. After all, since he is Jesus, perhaps he would be the senior pastor of the church, not just a member. And since he is Jesus, it probably wouldn't be long before it would be the biggest church in the world—a million members, 2 million. Who knows where it would stop? And what kind of a building complex would it take to accommodate that kind of congregation? It boggles the mind. Can you imagine the number of tourists (or perhaps we should call them pilgrims) who would descend on the church campus every day?

Or maybe he wouldn't want to be tied down to one church. After all, Jesus was a traveling preacher. Maybe he would become the most in-demand speaker ever, speaking at Christian conferences throughout the world, pulling down $100,000 for each speaking engagement, then donating the money to charity. He'd have the top-rated TV and radio shows of all time.

Who would his friends be? He'd probably play golf with Methodist bishops and Presbyterian moderators and Nazarene general superintendents and at least once a year with the pope. (Well, considering the pope's age, he might have to settle for backgammon that day.)

And who would have the most to lose by Jesus' appearing on the scene? That's not too hard to figure out either. Pornographers and gang members, drug pushers and addicts, pimps and prostitutes, anyone who makes a living from the sin industry. Jesus hates sin, and he has the clout to do something about it. If Jesus shows up, these folks are in trouble. Yes, Jesus would make enemies, and they would deserve every bit of whatever he decided to dish out.

There's just one thing wrong with this picture: It has nothing to do with the Jesus we see in the Gospels.

The Jesus we see there spent so much time hanging out with hookers and crooks and boozers that his enemies tagged him "a friend of sinners," but it didn't faze him. He kept right on hanging out with the same kind of folk. He didn't leave these friends in their sin-made messes, of course. He forgave their sins and invited them into his community of people who were being made new.

Seven demons: Jesus also called the 12 apostles his friends. Some of these had been devout Jews before Jesus showed up, but even these 12 included some of his friends of the shadier variety: Matthew the tax collector (who had probably made most of his living through extortion and embezzlement) and a radical anarchist named Simon the Zealot. And Judas Iscariot may have been a member of a group that advocated lawless violence. Among the women Jesus counted as close friends was Mary Magdalene, who had had seven demons.

These were Jesus' friends, and those who objected to his choice of friends became his enemies. Simon the Pharisee was so intrigued with Jesus' teaching that he invited Jesus home for dinner (Luke 7:36-50). During the meal, a prostitute showed up and anointed Jesus' feet with perfume. Simon gave Jesus the benefit of the doubt, assuming he didn't know who this woman was. As it turned out, though, not only did Jesus know, he felt honored, not scandalized, by her devotion. We're not told, but chances are that was the last time Simon had Jesus over for dinner.

It didn't take many events like that to earn Jesus the utter contempt and undying hostility of the Pharisees. Jesus, for all his talk of God, didn't keep his distance from sinners. In fact, he seemed to relish immersing himself in the lives of the riffraff. He seemed to feel right at home there. To him, though, they weren't riffraff. They were people with faces and histories and names, like Matthew and Zacchaeus and Mary and Joanna. They were his friends.

Jesus didn't take kindly to people who disrespected his friends. So when the Pharisees got on Jesus' case for the friends he kept, Jesus returned the favor. The Pharisees were the biblically correct religious leaders, the ones who made it their job to make sure people obeyed the Law (or heard about it if they didn't), the ones who defended a high view of Scripture against the Sadducees, who didn't believe the Bible really meant what it said.

Jesus, for all his talk of God, didn't keep his distance from sinners. In fact, he seemed to relish immersing himself in the lives of the riffraff. He seemed to feel right at home there.

ho were his enemies?

The Pharisees were leading the charge in the culture wars of their day, trying to beat back the forces of sexual immorality and drunkenness and impiety. To keep themselves and their families safe from the corrupting influence of these sinners, they built high walls of cultural separation between themselves and these lowlifes and waged their wars from the tops of these fortress walls.

When these religious hotshots took potshots at his friends, Jesus was outraged. He called the Pharisees hypocrites. He called them snakes. He called them children of the devil. And he did it to their faces, in public.

Let's go back to my original question: If Jesus lived in North America today, who would be his friends? Who would be his enemies?

His friends, I have no doubt, would be those most aware they needed him. Yes, we would see Jesus in the bars and brothels, but he wouldn't be there to wave protest signs or point fingers; he would be there to make friends. That's where he would find his kind of people.

Radical conversion: And yes, we would find him speaking in churches—as long as they let him. After all, he loved to teach in synagogues. But it wasn't to give pep talks; it was to announce the inbreaking of the radical reign of God and, in many cases, to call the religious folk to repent. Asking self-righteous religious folk to repent of their religion and to enter the kingdom didn't set well in most synagogues. Chances are it wouldn't go over much more in churches today, because Jesus wouldn't bless the status quo or cheerlead our culture wars; he would call us to radical conversion. He would tell us to tear down the walls we've built around ourselves to keep the world from contaminating us. He would call us to immerse ourselves in society, to love sinners. He would call us to do justice and love mercy. And if we refused to change our ways, he would call us names.

Speakers like that don't often get invited back.

This raises the most disturbing question of all. If that is what Jesus said and did, and I am supposed to be like Jesus, who should my friends be? Who should my enemies be? Whom should I be embracing? Whom should I be confronting? When shots are fired in the culture wars, should I be up on the wall shooting down? Or outside the walls taking the shots aimed at my "unsavory" friends?

But wait. Jesus called religious leaders names. That isn't polite. That isn't nice.

That's exactly what Jesus' disciples thought. Once "the disciples came to him and asked, 'Do you realize you offended the Pharisees by what you just said?'" (Matthew 15:12 New Living Translation).

Jesus knew exactly what he was doing. He wasn't trying to be nice. He was trying to unmask the self-righteous Pharisees so people would know not to follow them. Jesus didn't blast the Pharisees just because they were wrong; he exposed them because they were leading people down a life-destroying dead end. Jesus so wanted people to be free to say yes to the gospel that he felt compelled to confront this distorted version of God's message that drove people away from God rather than inviting them to the party.

Postmodernism: In our culture, as in Jesus', the greatest obstacle to people being able to embrace the gospel isn't secularism or evolution or postmodernism. It's not crime or pornography or drugs. It's the religious people who "crush people beneath impossible religious demands" (Luke 11:46 NLT), those who are careful to keep the fine print of the law while ignoring the headlines of justice, mercy and faith (Matthew 23:23 NLT). It's Christians who condemn sinners rather than befriending them, Christians more concerned about avoiding contamination than about understanding and loving hurting people right where they are.

Though the implications make me squirm, I'm forced to conclude that if Jesus lived in our culture, he would be just as quick to take on modern-day Pharisees as he was to blast those of his day. Watching law-abiding Christians isolating themselves in their holy huddles while keeping a safe distance from the people he was proud to call his friends, Jesus wouldn't sit quietly. He wouldn't be nice. He would speak out. He would point fingers. He would call people names. Even if it got him killed.

Just how committed am I to being like Jesus?

Eddy Hall (www.living-stones.com) is a church consultant and author in Goessel, Kan.

Watching law-abiding Christians isolating themselves in their holy huddles while keeping a safe distance from the people he was proud to call his friends, Jesus wouldn't sit quietly. He wouldn't be nice. He would speak out. He would point fingers.

difficult texts of the Bible

Long ago, even before he made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in his eyes.—Ephesians 1:4 NLT

The will of God and the destination of God's people

Second in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower

Some theological traditions have a well-developed theology of predestination and election of the saints. Mennonites do not put a lot of energy into reflecting on these doctrines. Our Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective does not directly address the issue. The premier text to which people look in the discussion of predestination, Ephesians 1:4-5 NRSV (God "chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world. … [God] destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will") is only referred to in the Confession in a commentary about Jesus Christ sharing in the character and work of God (p. 15). In spite of this, we find ourselves from time to time puzzling over questions of predestination and God's will.

Can we claim the passages of hope that comfort us with God's intimate presence and knowledge of us if we do not also claim other passages that make us squirm?

How do we understand the biblical assertion that "God destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the pleasure of his will" and the subsequent implication that some are not chosen? What do we do with more troubling references to God's will such as the refusal of Eli's wicked sons to listen to their father's reprimand: "They would not listen to the voice of their father; for it was the will of the Lord to kill them" (1 Samuel 2:25)? We also must include in this discussion other passages with which we are more comfortable. "I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope" (Jeremiah 29:11). Psalm 139 proclaims God's intimate knowledge of us, knowing our words before we speak them.

Scriptures referring to the will of God and to God's foreknowledge raise difficult questions for us. Can we claim the passages of hope that comfort us with God's intimate presence and knowledge of us if we do not also claim other passages that make us squirm? When we say that God is omniscient—all knowing—what do we mean? Does God know everything that has already happened and everything that will happen in the future? Has God planned everything out in detail? Does God change his mind? What difference do our actions make? What difference do our prayers make?

Golden calf: To begin to resolve the dilemma we must also consider other passages of Scripture. There are examples of prophets pleading with God to change his mind. When God told Abraham of his plan to destroy Sodom, Abraham begged God to save the city if only 10 righteous people could be found, and God agreed (Genesis 18:16-32). When God was angry and wanted to destroy Israel because the people had made a golden calf, Moses pleaded with God, "and the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people" (Exodus 32:14).

Ultimately how we resolve questions about predestination and God's will depends on our approach to biblical interpretation and the view of God that grows out of our biblical understandings. Do we believe in an implacable God who does not stray from a planned course, or do we believe in a God who acts in response to the actions of the people God has created?

We cannot understand the nature or work of God from any one passage. Each passage that informs our thinking is a piece of a puzzle that, when assembled, gives us a picture of God and God's work in the world. As we put this puzzle together, there may be pieces of it we do not understand or cannot explain, such as the implication that God prevented Eli's sons from

Correction: In "The Memory Man" (July 11), the poem "Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard" was wrongly titled "Elegy Written in a Country Court Yard."

While always ready to forgive, God also judges those who refuse to turn to God. Our loving God created the world and all that is in it but does not remain at a distance from this creation.

repenting because God wanted to destroy them. Pieces like this are part of the mystery of God. But these pieces do not prevent us from seeing the bigger picture that is emerging. This picture tells us about the nature of God, about God's relationship with the world, God's desires for humankind and how God works to bring those desires to reality.

The overarching picture we get from the Scriptures is of a God who is compassionate, merciful, faithful, loving and just. While always ready to forgive, God also judges those who refuse to turn to God. Our loving God created the world and all that is in it but does not remain at a distance from this creation. Instead God enters into the world and establishes a relationship with its people. God does this in order to bring shalom—the fullness of life God has desired for humankind from the beginning. God walked in the garden with Adam and Eve, worked through the prophets and ultimately entered the world as Jesus the Christ. God continues to be active in our world today and in the daily lives of people. Through God's involvement in the world, God has relinquished power that is rightfully God's and has accepted the limitation of working together with humans toward God's goals for the world. This puts the responsibility on us to seek to know God and God's will so we can work together with God.

Co-workers with God: Does this answer the question of whether all is planned out by God in advance and whether God's will for a person or situation is inevitable? I believe it does as it points to the fact that God lives in an interactive relationship with us. While God has an overall plan for the world, God depends on us as co-workers in that project. God has created us with a general plan for our lives. But there are many variations as we live out the specifics of that plan. We take many side trips or even wander off the path. In response to our actions—our faithfulness or unfaithfulness—God corrects, forgives, helps, issues new invitations and continues to walk with us.

In my experience, I believe that God has gifted me and called me to pastoral ministry in various forms. It took me years to recognize this calling, God's will in my life. Did God plan that I should explore various paths—sometimes closer to God, sometimes more distant—before I finally got clearer glimpses of God's will for my life in my mid-30s? Not necessarily, but God walked with me as I wandered, gently nudging me in certain directions when I paid enough attention to notice.

Peace Community Church in Clovis, Calif., was a new church plant that Duane, my husband, and I co-pastored. After eight years, a decision was made to close the church. Was it God's plan that it should close? Had we misunderstood God's will in trying to plant a new church? Had we been wasting our time? I don't believe so. In the wider scheme of things, God desires to touch as many people as possible with God's love. Through Peace Community Church, many lives were transformed. Ultimately, various factors came together that did not allow Peace Community Church to continue as a viable institution, and the decision was made to close. Was it God's will that the church should close? I do not believe it was. God would have been just as happy for Peace to continue—maybe happier. But because God gives God's people freedom and responsibility, God allowed it to close and now works with that reality.

God has chosen us in Christ, along with all others who respond to God's love, to bring glory to God and to help make God's will for the world a reality. But God does not force God's will on us. God waits for us to accept God's love and allows us to choose to be co-workers with God. God is patient with our stumbling and mistakes. God changes plans based on our faithfulness or our unfaithfulness. God is swayed by our earnest pleas. God does not force results. God has set aside absolute power and knowledge in order to be in relationship with us and to work together with us. This is the will of God.

God is patient with our stumbling and mistakes. God changes plans based on our faithfulness or our unfaithfulness. God is swayed by our earnest pleas. God does not force results.

Clare Ann Ruth-Heffelbower is Mennonite Central Committee country representative in Indonesia.

Changing seasons for camp programs

But commonalities still bind 40-year-old association

Labor Day has come and gone, the weather is changing and the kids are back in school. While the season for summer camp is over, that doesn't mean camp staffs are ready to lock their doors and go into hibernation.

"There are all sorts of creative ministries going on in terms of retreats all through the year," says Bob Wiebe, director of Camps With Meaning, an umbrella organization for three Winnipeg-area camps.

Wiebe is a past president of the Mennonite Camping Association, which is observing its 40th anniversary this year. MCA has 46 member organizations affiliated with the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church Canada, Mennonite Brethren, Brethren in Christ and Conservative Mennonite Conference. Members say MCA, among other things, provides them with a forum to address issues they face.

One of those issues is the increase in year-round activities. That means the traditional cabins with bunkbeds don't always work. People using camp facilities for events such as retreats are wanting more private facilities, says MCA president Don Rittenhouse, director of Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, Pa. "You don't have to go back too many years when retreat guests were comfortable in dormitory-type rooms," he says.

The challenge, Rittenhouse says, is to balance indoor comfort and convenience with the rustic outdoors.

And, despite the demands for more modern facilities, a camp's natural setting remains key. Former MCA president Ozzie Goering calls it "an environment that encourages [campers] to better their relationship with God and with other human beings."

A longtime professor of outdoor teacher education at the University of Northern Illinois, Goering has been involved with church-related camping programs for more than 50 years, when he organized college courses and was a member of a General Conference Mennonite Church camping committee. As camping grew as a church ministry, it became beneficial for those involved to meet.

"Camping [personnel] get together and talk, share problems, concerns, visions," says Goering,' now retired and living in Moundridge, Kan. "The idea of being together with camping people is inspirational."

MCA holds binational meetings every two years, while regional meetings are held in the alternating years. Other activities include training for camp boards and congregational and worship resources. There is even talk of hiring an executive director, a position that was eliminated in the 1970s for financial reasons.

MCA is directed by an 11-member board. The organization receives some administrative support from Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries.

There are a variety of camping associations, both religious and secular. "What's missing is the Mennonite identity," Wiebe says. "We have found ourselves to be most at home with the MCA because of the common roots."

That point is echoed by Eugene Wingert, director of Brethren in Christ-affiliated Kenbrook Bible Camp, Lebanon, Pa., and former MCA board member. "We do camp differently because of who we are," he says, citing the Anabaptist emphasis on peace and justice.

Nevertheless, MCA does not appeal to all Mennonite-related camping programs. For example, of the 11 Mennonite Brethren camps in Canada, only two are MCA members. There is only one U.S. MB camp, which is also not an MCA member.

David Wiebe, executive director of the Canadian Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches, says the Canadian MB camps have chosen to affiliate with Christian Camping International (CCI), a mainstream evangelical organization with members in 30 countries.

CCI has an active Canadian chapter, Wiebe says, "and MCA is seen to be U.S.-based, and the agenda is quite diffferent."

Thirteen Canadian camps are MCA members.

As camping ministries continue to face changes, Rittenhouse sees the future of MCA filled with possibilities. "As local congregations see themselves as mission centers," he says, "there's a grand opportunity ... to develop some interesting team-partnership approaches."—*Rich Preheim for Meetinghouse*

Editor's note: *MCA president Don Rittenhouse was killed in a car accident July 28, only a few days after being interviewed for this story.*

City meets country for fifth year in a row

South central Kansas is still a rural area, but not everyone has those connections. So on Aug. 26, for the fifth consecutive year, one event tried to provide them.

A Day on the Farm, held on the Maynard Knepp-Carol Duerksen farm near Goessel, provided visitors a chance to pet animals, ride horses and watch farm demonstrations.

"It is our desire to give the children in our churches and communities a farm experience," says committee chair Jim Gehring.

A Day on the Farm was sponsored by Agri-Urban Inc., which allows nonfarmers to financially support farmers' livestock. The profits from the sale of the animals go to the General Conference Mennonite Church, Western District Conference and Bethel College in North Newton, Kan. —*GCMC News Service*

EMU, MCC join with Moscow program to introduce restorative justice concepts to beleaguered Russia

MOSCOW—After seven decades of socialism that guaranteed employment and housing, Russia's economy has collapsed. Unemployment, homelessness, alcoholism and drug use have all risen sharply. A growing number of children are neglected and abandoned, and criminal convictions of 16- and 17-year-olds are at a higher percentage than any other age group. More than half the juveniles sent to prison have been convicted of theft, not violent crime.

Into the fray have stepped Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) of Harrisonburg, Va. They have joined with Moscow's Public Center for Legal and Judicial Reform (PCLJR) to create the Partnership for Restorative Justice in Russia. The project brings together judges, prosecutors, police officers, civic organizations, religious leaders and educators to introduce the philosophy and practice of restorative justice and to start victim-offender reconciliation programs in targeted Russian cities.

"By working together in their communities, [these groups and individuals] can help restore the social fabric torn by particular crimes," says Steve Hochstetler Shirk, MCC country co-representative in the former Soviet Union.

A pilot project in Moscow resulted in 40 completed mediation cases and improved relations between local organizations and state structures.

Howard Zehr, director of EMU's Conflict Transformation Program, last month led an introductory seminar in the city of Dzerzhinsk. During one session, youth workers addressed the abrasive and accusatory way a police officer had treated teenagers outside their center for youth from troubled homes. While one police inspector agreed that such behavior is unprofessional and inappropriate, another pointed out the frustrations of dealing with teens who repeatedly commit crimes and that police try to do their best in these situations.

MCC photo by Howard Zehr

Mikhail Fliamer (center) and Rustem Maksudov (right) of the Moscow-based Public Center for Legal and Judicial Reform lead a training seminar on restorative justice.

This led both the youth workers and police to the conclusion that they are all facing the same frustrations. What began as a confrontation turned into constructive dialogue, including a request from law-enforcement agencies to train police inspectors in reconciliation techniques, says Rustem Maksudov of PCLJR.

Educational materials and resources are also being produced, including a Russian-language social work textbook for restorative justice programs and an Internet library of restorative justice materials in Russian and other languages.

The Partnership for Restorative Justice in Russia is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development with additional funding from MCC.—*MCC News Service*

By working together in their communities, [these groups and individuals] can help restore the social fabric torn by particular crimes.

—*Steve Hochstetler Shirk*

Choir spreads musical message

SOFIA, Bulgaria—The Bulgarian woman called it a miracle.

"Ten years ago under communism, we would never have dreamed that we would be worshiping God with an American choir," she said.

But from a small Gypsy congregation in Bulgaria to a cathedral in Switzerland, that's what happened from July 26 to Aug. 8 as a 28-voice choir conducted a European ministry tour.

The choir was an outreach of A Song for the Nations, a financially autonomous program under the auspices of Eastern Mennonite Missions. Another choir plans to present nine performances of Handel's *Messiah* next year in Turkey.—*EMM News Service*

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Congregations get creative for giving to mission

ELKHART, Ind.—Innovative congregations across North America are discovering more dynamic ways to support mission, making it more than just another line item in the budget.

In June, Aurora (Ohio) Mennonite Church's 18th annual mission auction was its biggest ever, raising more than $13,000 for Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM). While the congregation averages 100 people in Sunday-morning attendance, more than 250 attended the auction.

Although a percentage of Aurora's budget is already designated for mission, the auction is "one way we can all work together to send in extra," says Verda Troyer, a member of the mission auction committee.

Washington (Iowa) Mennonite Church uses its dramatic talent to support mission at its annual spring dinner theater. In one weekend in 1999, the 125-member congregation raised $4,000 for MBM and the Iowa-Nebraska Mennonite Conference's mission commission.

The dinner theater features valet parking, a full-course meal, music by a youth band and humorous and provocative skits on a scriptural theme. Pastor Tim Detweiler says the event is an enjoyable project that involves almost everyone in the congregation.

"[Mission] always ended up being the line item cut at the end of the year, and the congregation didn't feel good about that," he says.

In Burr Oak, Mich., Locust Grove Mennonite Church raised $500 for mission at its annual picnic and hog roast on July 23. At a similar picnic three years ago, the 240-member congregation raised more than enough to finance a house for a family in Brazil. This year's funds will allow them to begin a local edition of *Together* magazine, a quarterly paper containing stories from the congregation. It will be delivered to all the homes in the Burr Oak area, welcoming people to the church.

Millersburg (Ohio) Mennonite Church nearly doubled its mission giving when it began observing quarterly mission-focus Sundays two years ago.

"We've had an increase in giving because of the increase in focus," says pastor Tom Michaels.—*Anne Horst of MBM News Service*

> **[Mission] always ended up being the line item cut at the end of the year, and the congregation didn't feel good about that.**
>
> —*Tim Detweiler*

More-with-Less Cookbook
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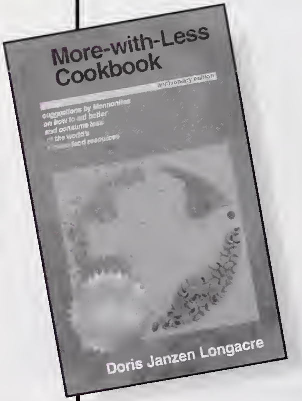

With over 800,000 copies in print, the *More-with-Less Cookbook* is our best-selling book ever. Along the way, this cookbook has not only changed how people eat but their entire approach to life has reflected this more-with-less philosophy.

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"What do you say about a cookbook that changed your life? Thank you, *More-with-Less*, for 25 years of good food and the education that came with it."—*Teresa Reimers, Ozamiz, Philippines*

"*More-with-Less Cookbook* became my food bible, not only for its recipes but for its philosophy. I see it as a survival manual!"—*Shirlee Kohler Yoder, Harrisonburg, Va.*

This 25th-anniversary edition features a new foreword along with the original collection of recipes—spiced with anecdotes, comments, and tips gleaned from 25 years of cooking *More-with-Less*.

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Workers return to Japan as Mennonites

TOKYO—When Mike and Teresa Sherrill arrived in Japan last month, they returned to the country where they met and married. In the six years since they last lived there, they experienced many changes, but their call to Japan was never far from their thoughts.

"This is a return to roots we have in Japan, as well as the beginning of a new journey," Mike says.

The Sherrills returned to Japan as a three-generation family with their sons, 3-year-old Isaiah and 1-year-old Jeremiah, and Teresa's mother, Juanita Thompson. They also return as Mennonites.

The Sherrills are mission volunteers in Tokyo with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. Their two-year term will allow Japanese Mennonites to become acquainted with the Sherrills as Mike completes his dissertation research on the revitalization of Japanese churches. At the end of the term, Japanese Mennonites will work with the Sherrills, COM and MBM to decide the next steps.

Teresa's experience in Japan began in 1980 when she went to Japan as a short-term mission worker with Life Ministries, followed by two Presbyterian assignments around her master's degree studies at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, Calif.

Mike's experience in Japan also began with a short-term mission assignment with Life Ministries. In the early 1990s, he began full-time ministry with a Church of God congregation in Kanazawa, on the west coast of Japan. That's where Mike and Teresa met and were married in 1992.

They returned to the United States in 1994 so Mike could complete a master of divinity degree at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind. "I saw all my classes through the eyes of my call to Japan," he says. "Every paper I wrote was somehow related to Japan."

Mike had spent his childhood with a Mennonite foster family, but for Teresa, AMBS provided her first exposure to Mennonites. It was at AMBS that the Sherrills made a commitment to being Mennonite. They attended Southside Fellowship, where "we experienced tremendous community," Teresa says.

The Sherrills say they felt surrounded by love and care, particularly when their first child, Micah, was stillborn in 1995.

In 1997, Isaiah was born, Mike graduated from AMBS, the family moved to California and Teresa's mother joined the household. Mike began studies at Fuller, writing extensively about the first 30 years of General Conference Mennonite Church mission in Japan.

In Pasadena, the Sherrills were involved at Pasadena Mennonite Church and a Japanese ministry in the Little Tokyo section of Los Angeles.

Now the family will work to build bridges between the secular world and the church on the other side of the Pacific Ocean.—*Bethany Swope of GCMC and MBM news services*

Join us on the transformation journey…

I believe the work of God is of paramount importance and that the intentions behind integration are to further his work, therefore I excitedly anticipate its completion.

—Sheri Williams, Goshen, Ind.

The transformation project is reuniting members of the Mennonite family in a shared commitment through which the Holy Spirit is filling us with new energy and vision for mission here and around the world.

—Tom Lehman, Chapel Hill, N.C.

Help God's healing and hope flow through us to the world. The new Mennonite Church USA is raising $800,000 to help fund integration. We invite your financial support on Sunday, October 29—Transformation Sunday: Envisioning Healing & Hope.

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Fund our future together
Sunday, October 29

Mennonite Church USA

Gift of math books adds up for Bethel College

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—More than 1,700 books, most of them on mathematics and some nearly 300 years old, have found a new home at Bethel College. Peter Flusser, a retired professor and book collector from Salina, Kan., has donated his collection to the North Newton school.

Flusser had a collegial friendship with Arnold M. Wedel, who taught mathematics at Bethel during five decades, starting in 1951. While teaching at Kansas Wesleyan University in Salina, Flusser also had been a colleague of several Bethel alumni who were also on Kansas Wesleyan's faculty.

The 60 boxes of books encompass nearly every area of mathematics, including number theory, algebra, topology, probability, real analysis, geometry, calculus and mathematics history. The collection also includes about 300 nonmath books, such as history, philosophy, literature and linguistics.

Saskatchewan high school facing financial crisis

ROSTHERN, Sask.—A high school affiliated with the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta and Conference of Mennonites of Saskatchewan has taken steps to counterbalance an anticipated $122,000 (U.S.) shortfall.

About 115 students showed up Aug. 28 for the first day of classes at Rosthern (Sask.) Junior College (RJC), short of the 125 needed to break even. Furthermore, both the Alberta and Saskatchewan conferences are experiencing financial constraints and have reduced their subsidies.

At an emergency meeting last month, the board of RJC agreed to reduce staff time and program, dip into reserves and set up an ad hoc committee to monitor the situation. The board also decided to review the school's relationship with the conferences and revisit school promotion.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Author receives top Canadian honor

WINNIPEG—Well-known Mennonite novelist Rudy Wiebe has been named an Officer of the Order of Canada, Canada's highest honor, recognizing lifetime achievements. Among Wiebe's works are *Peace Shall Destroy Many* and *The Temptations of Big Bear*. A former editor of *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, Wiebe is a member of Lendrum Mennonite Brethren Church in Edmonton and professor emeritus at the University of Alberta.—*Mennonite Brethren Herald.*

by the way ...

Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., won nearly 54 percent of its men's soccer games in the 1990s, the best winning percentage of all the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church college men's soccer teams during the decade.

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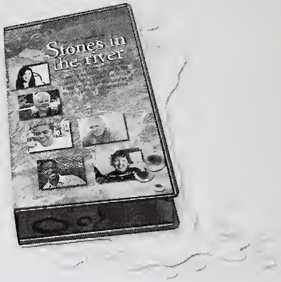

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Omar Ayala, Bolivia, IVEP, 1992-93

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Births

Gahman, Autumn Clemmer, Aug. 5, to Jennifer and Robert Gahman, Pennsburg, Pa.

Hawks, Mackenzie, Aug. 14, to Michelle and Ryan Hawks, Rensselaer, Ind.

Holsomback, Abagail Laine, Aug. 18, to James and Sarah (Graber) Holsomback, Olds, Iowa.

King, Logan, Aug. 6, to Brent and Corey King, Hannah, Ind.

Klingelsmith, Callie Nicole, July 27, to Lori Klingelsmith, Archbold, Ohio.

Kneifel, Kyer Smith, June 16, to Angela Kneifel, Kouts, Ind.

Masters, Bethany Jean, Aug. 25, to Glenda (Nussbaum) and Robert Masters, Dundee, Ohio.

Miller, Nathan Andrew, July 28, to Chellie (Brooks) and Eric Miller, Bloomington, Ill.

Misch, Madison and Mason (twins), July 14, to Kevin and Pam Misch, Wheatfield, Ind.

Nafziger, Alaiza Araujo, Aug. 19, to Izaete and Tim Nafziger, Goshen, Ind.

Roth, Kayla Sue, Aug. 9, to Connie (Julien) and David Roth, Des Allemands, La.

Stuber, Jack Aidan, June 3, to Lori (Nofziger) and Michael Stuber, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Whetro, Whitney Marie, July 17, to Krista (Wyse) and Rick Whetro, Bryan, Ohio.

Yoder, Peyton King, Aug. 2, to Linda King and Keith Yoder, Hickory, N.C.

Correction: In the Aug. 22 Births, Doug and Heidi (Zendt) Hochstetler's daughter's name was listed as Emily Elizabeth instead of Emma Elizabeth.

Marriages

Alderfer/Leatherman: Andrew Alderfer, Souderton, Pa., and Laura Leatherman, Perkasie, Pa., Aug. 12 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville, Pa.

Brenneman/Kropf: Mark Brenneman, Tavistock, Ont., and Amanda Kropf, Shakespeare, Ont., July 21.

Christian/Kapusta: Cory Christian, Souderton, Pa., and Jeremy Kapusta, Harleysville, Pa., Aug. 5 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Contreras/Tyree: Dorri Contreras, Rocky Ford, Colo., and Ed Tyree, Rocky Ford, Aug. 26 at Rocky Ford Mennonite Church.

Cortez/Frieze: Wade Cortez, Des Allemands, La., and Robin Frieze, Luling, La., Aug. 31 at New Orleans.

Derstine/Hoover: Heather Derstine, Souderton, Pa., and Brian Hoover, Souderton, Aug. 26 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Eicher/Nofziger: David Eicher, Archbold, Ohio, and Kristina Nofziger, Archbold, Aug. 19 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Ferguson/Lees: Darren Ferguson, Bright, Ont., and Deanna Lees, Parkhill, Ont., Aug. 5 at Tavistock (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Gingerich/Springer: Sonia Gingerich, Elkhart, Ind., and Eric Springer, Elkhart, Aug. 26 at Waterford Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Goering/Sims: Matthew Goering, Boulder, Colo., and Sadie Sims, Newton, Kan., June 17 at Red Feather Lakes, Colo.

Graber/Shenk: Cassandra Graber, Boulder, Colo., and Troy Shenk, Silver Plume, Colo., Aug. 13 at Boulder Mennonite Church.

Harley/Toppin: Eric Harley, Goshen, Ind., and Rebecca Toppin, Berlin, N.J., July 9 at Immanuel Baptist Church, Kenosha, Wis.

Kaufman/Woodall: Cristina Kaufman, Boulder, Colo., and Scott Woodall, Springfield, Colo., July 15 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson, Kan.

Kehrberg/Kratzer: Kevin Kehrberg, Newton, Kan., and Sarah Kratzer, Kidron, Ohio, Aug. 12 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron.

Neuenschwander/Ramer: Rod Neuenschwander, Apple Creek, Ohio, and Susan Ramer, North Lawrence, Ohio, July 29 at Sonnenberg Mennonite Church, Kidron, Ohio.

Raber/Rowe: Marilyn Raber, Uniontown, Ohio, and John Rowe, Massillon, Ohio, Aug. 26 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Bender, Ivan, 80, Tavistock, Ont., died Aug. 10. Spouse: Beatrice Brenneman Bender. Parents: Noah and Magdalena Bender (deceased). Other survivors: children Richard, Jim, Mary Ann, Larry; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 13 at Tavistock Mennonite Church.

Bucher, Vernon, 87, Pandora, Ohio, died Aug. 5. Spouse: Wilma Neuenschwander Bucher. Parents: Ezra and Elvina Hilty Bucher (deceased). Other survivors: children Norman, Delores Warmuth; four grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 9 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Buller, Grant, 76, Henderson, Neb., died Aug. 19 of cancer. Spouse: Edith Buller. Parents: John and Dora Buller (deceased). Other survivors: children Steve, Kathy Siebert, Denise Olderbak, Larry; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 23 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Carr, Glennis Schultz, 87, Larned, Kan., died Aug. 11. Spouse: DeLos Carr (deceased). Parents: Peter and Lillie Unruh Schultz (deceased). Survivors: children Larry, Carla Bowman, Harlie, Bonnie Carr Mosiman; seven grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 16 at Bergthal Mennonite Church, Pawnee Rock, Kan.

Doerksen, Marvin, 73, Inman, Kan., died Aug. 22 of cancer. Spouse: Arlene Goering Doerksen. Other survivors: children Marilyn Daniels, Norma; one grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Inman Mennonite Church.

Eberly, Richard, 68, Waynesboro, Pa., died Aug. 7. Spouse: Lois Lesher Eberly. Parents: Harry (deceased) and Janet Perry Eberly. Other survivors: daughter Judy Wingert; six grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 11 at Waynesboro.

Good, Ruby Hartman, 67, Elida, Ohio, died Aug. 17 of cancer. Spouse: Chester Good. Parents: William and Anna Hartman (deceased). Other survivors: children Gary, Kenneth, Beverly Brenneman, Robert; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 21 at Pike Mennonite Church, Elida.

Goodremont, Martha Frey, 93, LaGrange, Ind., died Aug. 3. Spouse: Francis Goodremont (deceased). Parents: Ammon and Fannie Yoder Frey (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 6 at LaGrange.

Hartman, Erma Mumaw, 72, Goshen, Ind., died Aug. 22. Spouse Paul Hartman. Parents: Aaron and Florence Mumaw (deceased). Other survivors: children Sharon Schwartzendruber, Julia Stech, Marlene Sutter, Anna Mast, Darrel; 33 grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Huebert, DeLorris Peters, 72, Henderson, Neb., died Aug. 21. Spouse: Leo Huebert (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Elizabeth Mierau Peters (deceased). Survivors: children Sandra Klassen, Joan Donner, Kathleen Taormina, Randy, Jimmy, Marcie, Cindy; 18 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 24 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Keim, Catherine, 83, North Canton, Ohio, died July 27. Spouse: Levi Keim (deceased). Parents: Benjamin and Anna Sommers Miller (deceased). Survivors: children Anna Miller, Leona Troyer, Katie Potter, Alta Bares, Raymond, Ben, Lester; 28 grandchildren; 47 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 30 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Hartville, Ohio.

Lefever, Mary Groff, 101, Lititz, Pa., died July 19. Spouse: Harry Lefever (deceased). Parents: Amos and Lizzie Metzler Groff (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Anna Hershey, Alma Weaver, Harry; 26 grandchildren; 72 great-grandchildren; 12 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 22 at Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Myers, Leidy, 82, Lansdale, Pa., died Aug. 14. Spouse: Kathryn Godshall Myers. Parents: John and Ella Myers Myers (deceased). Other survivors: children Victor, Louise Newswanger, Carol Ann Brown, Sylvia Allebach; nine grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 17 at Dock Woods Community Chapel, Lansdale.

Peters, William, 99, Henderson, Neb., died Aug. 21. Spouse: Anna Epp Peters (deceased). Parents: John and Katharina Wieler Peters (deceased). Survivors: children LeRoy, Harlan, Lucille Gering, Inez Hiebner, Marlene; 10 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Swartz, Grace Bechtel, 94, Spring City, Pa., died July 27 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Paul Swartz (deceased). Parents: Henry and Emma Bechtel (deceased). Survivors: son Robert; foster son Samuel Black; three grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren; six foster grandchildren; seven foster great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 3 at Vincent Mennonite Church, Spring City.

Warner, Ronald, 71, Fort Wayne, Ind., died Aug. 18 of cancer. Spouse: Janice Warner. Parents: Albert and Audrey Warner (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Rodney, Randy, Tina; stepchildren Steve Hoyer, Michelle Newman, Brenda Himes, Karen Faris, Patti Meek, Debbie Busian; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild; 14 stepgrandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 26 at North Leo Mennonite Church, Leo, Ind.

Yoder, Lois Yoder, 66, Shipshewana, Ind., died Aug. 17 of a blood clot. Spouse: Robert Yoder. Parents: Ira and Ola Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Randy, Roger, Ron, Rob; 12 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 21 at Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Zimmerman, Verna, 90, Lititz, Pa., died June 25. Parents: Noah and Sarah Martin Zimmerman (deceased). Funeral: June 28 at Landis Homes Chapel, Lititz. Memorial: July 1 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Zook, Omar, 89, Oley, Pa., died Aug. 17. Spouse: Mary Fisher Zook (deceased). Parents: Morris and Susan Beiler Zook (deceased). Survivors: children Ruth Liechty, Fern, Harold, Lloyd, Mervin, Kenneth, Omar Jr., Donald; 20 grandchildren; nine great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 21 at New Life Bible Fellowship Church, Oley.

classifieds

- **First Mennonite Church** of Richmond, Va., seeks a full-time ***pastor***. We are a multiethnic/racial metropolitan congregation that desires seminary-trained candidates committed to Anabaptist beliefs. Reply to Bill Ellis, PO Box 1463, Richmond, VA 23218; <wbellis@juno.com>.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** seeks ***maintenance technician***: full-time, salaried or voluntary service with benefits, including health; lodging available on grounds. Staff invest personal skills to host God's ministry in a natural setting. Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, 1-800-839-1021 for application; or resume to Rt. 5 Box 145, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666.

- **First Mennonite Church** of Fort Wayne, Ind., a diverse urban congregation, seeks a full-time ***pastor*** who will join us in our newfound vision, which incorporates a lay ministry team. We seek one whose gifts include preaching, administration and intergenerational people skills, and experience in cross-cultural settings.

  Contact Lamar Yoder, 219-456-1750; or <ldyoder@aol.com>.

- **West Fallowfield Christian School** is accepting applications for a part-time ***director of development***, which involves establishing and managing the school's planned giving program. WFCS is a K-8 Mennonite elementary school in Atglen, Pa., founded in 1941.

  Contact WFCS, PO Box 279, Atglen, PA 19310; 610-593-5011; <glenny@epix.net>.

Mennonite Central Committee invites applications for the position of

DIRECTOR of International Program

Key qualifications include: International leadership experience; Understanding of global mission; Ability to think and plan strategically within a complex organization.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking.

Starting date: **June 4, 2001**
Location: **AKRON, Pennsylvania**
Applications will be accepted through DECEMBER 1, 2000

Direct inquiries to: **Charmayne Brubaker or Becky Stahly, MCC Human Resources, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, phone 717-859-1151, fax: 717-859-2171, email: cdb@mcc.org or rss@mcc.org**

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- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has two openings for single people for ***one-year voluntary service assignments*** (begin dates immed. and Nov. 1). For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Doylestown Mennonite Church** in Bucks County, Pa. (30 miles north of Philadelphia), seeks a full-time ***pastor*** to begin Jan. 1, 2001. The 225-year-old suburban congregation has a current attendance of 150. The pastor will provide direction and vision with a strong leadership team. A commitment to church growth and evangelism is desired.

  Please contact or send resume to Jackie Swartley, 225 Schwenkmill Road, Perkasie, PA 18944; 215-257-1899; <JBS@netcarrier.com>.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** is seeking applicants for the following positions with ***Ten Thousand Villages***. Positions are offered on a salaried or volunteer basis.

  Processing supervisor, Akron, Pa., immediate
  Tagging/packaging coordinator, Akron, Pa., immediate
  Human resources manager, Akron, Pa., immediate
  Head cook, Ephrata, Pa., immediate
  Regional sales manager (western U.S.), Oct. 4
  For more information, please contact Sherrie Ober at 717-859-8117.

- **Eden Health Care Services** seeks ***CEO***. EHCS, centered in Winkler, Man., is owned by Manitoba Mennonite conferences and churches. It provides acute and community mental health and wellness programs in collaboration with our faith constituencies, local communities and the regional and provincial health authorities. It has 135 employees and a cumulative budget approaching $8 million. The candidate should be a visionary and strategic leader, planner and team builder capable of supervising and directing all aspects of a group of faith-based mental health, residential, training, employment, counseling, wellness and industry programs. An understanding and affirmation of Anabaptist faith and values, health-care management experience and public relations skills will be assets.

  Submit resumes by Oct. 2, 2000, to Tim Stair, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite 1, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254; email <info@mhsonline.org>; or to Harry Wiens, Eden Health Care Services, Box 1120, Altona, MB R0G 0B0; fax 204-324-1275; email <hjwiens@mb.sympatico.ca>.

- **Amigo Centre**, a camp/retreat center ministry in southern Michigan, has the following staff needs:

  Food service manager starting as soon as possible. This person is responsible for menu planning, food ordering, staff scheduling, some cooking, etc. This is a full-time salaried position with benefits. Salary depends on experience. Housing may be available on grounds if needed.

  Dining hall hostess starting as soon as possible. This person would be responsible for setting up for guest groups, hosting the groups and cleaning up after the groups. This is a one-year VS position.

  Office manager beginning Oct. 1. Duties include bookkeeping, database management, registrations, mailings and general office responsibilities. This is a full-time salaried position. Salary is dependent on experience.

  If interested in any of the above positions, contact Dana Sommers at 616-651-2811; <Dana@Amigocentre.org>; or write Amigo Centre, 26455 Banker Rd., Sturgis, MI 49091.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks ***vice president for enrollment and marketing***. 12-month, full-time position. Doctoral degree preferred, master's degree required. Higher education administration, supervision, marketing or advertising, teaching, communications (public media, public relations or journalism) experience is desirable. Responsible for supervision of the following positions: directors of admissions for the undergraduate, seminary and graduate programs; director of financial assistance; and director of communications. Responsible for coordinating retention activities, integrated market planning as it relates to recruitment and retention, discerning the marketplace for EMU programs, and educating and motivating all people at EMU concerning the importance of their role in student recruitment, retention and communicating the EMU story. Application review begins immediately and will continue until position is filled. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply.

  Contact Joseph L. Lapp, President, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4100; email <lappj@emu.edu>; or visit our web site <www.emu.edu>. Eastern Mennonite University complies with federal and state requirements for nondiscrimination in employment with regard to gender, age, race, color, handicap, national and ethnic origin.

by Gordon Houser

We tend to watch film for entertainment, but it can also educate. And unlike text, it can captivate us on several levels. Amid the clutter of caustic, violent fare in our cinemas these days, it's rare to find films that engage us emotionally, intellectually and morally on religious themes.

In 1988 and 1989, the late Polish director Krzysztof Kieslowski made a series of one-hour films for television called *The Decalogue*. Each of these films is devoted to one of the Ten Commandments. They are not literal illustrations but fables inspired by the biblical text.

The films are set mostly around an apartment complex in modern Warsaw. Each piece has a different set of characters with their own stories, so you can watch them separately and in any order.

The stories are complex yet focused. Each carries its own surprises; you cannot predict what will happen. In one a boy asks his father questions about death, God and the meaning of life. The father, who teaches students about computers, says, "You just die." Later a tragedy shows the father that the god of reason he follows is inadequate.

A woman visits a professor who had refused to save her from the Warsaw ghetto as a 6-year-old Jew. She learns why.

Two brothers learn that their recently deceased father had a valuable stamp collection. Will greed defeat their relationship?

A young woman discovers a letter from her mother, who died five days after the daughter was born. It says the girl's father is not her real father—or does it?

New Yorker film critic David Denby writes, "The quality of the writing and the acting [in *The Decalogue*] is so high that an American viewer may ruefully conclude that even our most serious efforts in the movies are aimed at adults who have barely attained the moral age of 12."

The Decalogue is an excellent resource for a discussion group, a Sunday school class or small group from your congregation. But give yourselves plenty of time to discuss each film. There is plenty to engage you.

These films are now available on video with English subtitles. You likely won't find them in your local video store (ask for them anyway), but they are available from Facets Video, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614-9814, 800-532-2387, <www.facets.org>. I hope they will soon be available for purchase.

From our readers

For a little nonlight reading see *Apacalypticism and Millennialism: Shaping a Believers Church Eschatalagy far the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Loren L. Johns (Pandora Press Canada, 2000, $37.50). The 27 essays were delivered at the 13th Believers' Church conference in 1999 at Bluffton (Ohio) College and swiftly put into print. They represent a survey of theological end times topics in anticipation of Jan. 1, 2000. Only one paper, by Susan Biesecker-Mast, covers Y2K. Robert G. Clouse examines Hal Lindsey, and Daniel Hertzler reviews the "Left Behind" novels. There is no mention of the "end of the world" hymns inserted into *Hymnal: A Warship Baak* or of the 1995 Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective, which uses "new heaven and new earth" many times in contrast with its absence in Mennonite confessions before 1945, when atomic weapons were first used. And there is little appreciation for how the literal use of "new heaven and new earth" undermines protecting the earth.—*David E. Ortman, Seattle*

In response to the Aug. 22 Mediaculture on evolution and creationism, Wayne Wiens, Newton, Kan., recommends *Finding Darwin's God: A Scientist's Search for Comman Graund Between Gad and Evalutian* by Kenneth I. Miller (HarperCollins, 1999, $25) and *The Tawer af Babel: The Evidence Against the New Creatianism* by Robert Pennock (MIT Press, 1999, $45). Miller, a biologist and a Catholic, provides in one chapter a critique of Intelligent Design theories. Pennock, a Quaker philosopher of science, argues that creationists' angst about evolution is unnecessary.

art

The Mulvane Art Museum at Washburn University, Topeka, Kan., is exhibiting Mennonite household objects, including furniture, clothing, clocks, quilts and other fiber arts. Guest curator is Reinhild Janzen. Spanning more than three centuries, the artifacts are displayed within three galleries by historical period and geographical origin. The exhibit closes on Sept. 30.

films

Sunshine (R) is a powerful saga about three generations of a Hungarian Jewish family, from the beginning of the 20th century through two world wars and the Communist purge of the 1950s. Ralph Fiennes plays the main male character in each of the three generations of the Sonnenschein (translated Sunshine) family. It is a story of anti-Semitism, survival and freedom.

books

Artists, Citizens, Philosophers Seeking the Peace of the City: An Anabaptist Thealogy of Culture by Duane K. Friesen (Herald Press, 2000, $16.99) draws upon the "alternative culture" tradition of the Bible and of church history to engage our culture in a positive way. He applies a Trinitarian model to aesthetics, politics and wisdom. The book is ambitious in scope and purpose as Friesen calls Christians to be both aliens and citizens, to have a separate identity while remaining connected to the wider culture. This includes developing skill "at discriminating excellence from shoddiness, superficiality and pretentiousness."

videos

Hurricane (R) is based on the true story of Reuben "Hurricane" Carter, a champion boxer who spent more than 30 years in prison for a murder of which he was later acquitted. Denzel Washington gives a riveting performance in the title role.

Besieged (R) is a small, beautiful film by Bernardo Bertolucci about a young African woman (Thandie Newton) who works as a maid in Rome for Mr. Kinsky (David Thewlis), an eccentric English musician. His response to the Gospel text "Those who want to save their life will lose it" moves the story forward.

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Rich Preheim

The house of ushers

Scripture tells us that what we think can be just as damning as what we say. While I don't think I have ever uttered a discouraging word about a certain group in the church, I know I have not always thought of them as I should.

Those people are our ushers, and to them I want to apologize. My impressions of ushers' work were based on misperceptions and ignorance. I now see that ushering isn't even work —it's a vital ministry to the body of believers.

From an early age I was struck by the wide variety of skills and talents needed for congregational life: to prepare and deliver a sermon, to perform music, to teach Sunday school, to shepherd the work of committees, even to keep the meetinghouse clean and usable.

But what did ushers do that required any special ability? All they did was hand out bulletins and collect the offering, making sure not to send a collection plate down the same pew from opposite ends.

Then several years ago, I was asked to serve as an usher at my congregation. I immediately said yes. It was a no-brainer because I thought ushering was a no-brainer. I could serve without having to go to any extra meetings or have any obligations outside Sunday mornings. Since I go to church anyway, I would just have to go a bit earlier when it was time for my monthly stint. I would hand out bulletins, seat people and collect the offering. The most complicated duty would be counting the number of people in the pews while passing the collection plate. But then I could beat the crowd out the door when the service was over.

My 'no-brainer' has become my most gratifying contribution to my congregation.

All of which has turned out to be the case. I get less of the Sunday paper read before I have to go to church and take my post prior to the congregation's arrival. I seat people, which can be rather easy, since many congregants have been sitting in the same pew for years. And I'm happy to report I have yet to drop a collection plate.

But a curious thing has happened. Being an usher made me realize just how important an usher is. Now my "no-brainer" has become my most gratifying contribution to my congregation.

At every worship service, ushers are called to put into practice the biblical theme of hospitality. Nowhere is that more important than in the house of the Lord, where everyone is welcome. "Without the gracious hospitality of individuals and groups in the church, new persons won't be attracted to the church," writes Ervin Stutzman in *Welcome! A Biblical and Practical Guide to Receiving New Members.* "There is no evangelistic substitute for the love of God ministered by the body of Christ."

Or as St. Benedict said, "All guests who present themselves are to be received as Christ."

While that responsibility rests with everyone, ushers are in a prime position to demonstrate Christian hospitality. They won't have time for lengthy introductions. But they can smile, say, "Good morning (or good afternoon or good evening)," maybe offer a handshake. Such simple actions can go far in communicating warmth and love to longtime members and newcomers alike.

For many congregations, ushers' responsibilities include seating people. That certainly can have logistic advantages, preventing overcrowding in one place of the sanctuary while another remains virtually empty. But more importantly, by seating someone, an usher should communicate, "You are so important that we will make room for you."

It is a gift for an usher to be able to extend such hospitality on behalf of the congregation and on behalf of God. It is also a gift to collect gifts. One of the most humbling and powerful aspects of my ushering experience is collecting the congregation's tithes and offerings and then presenting them for dedication for the work of the kingdom. Ushers hold literally in their hands financial gifts that not only fund our endeavors in God's name but also represent our response to a loving, generous God.

Like the tiny mustard seed that becomes the largest of all garden plants, so the simple acts of the usher are among the most powerful in a congregation. I'm sorry it took me so long to realize that. And I'm glad I have had the opportunity to find out.—*rp*

the Mennonite

September 26, 2000

Anne Stuckey leaves her position as director of Ministerial Leadership Services for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries after nine years of helping call people to pastoral ministry.

Calling the called

page 4

6 Nourishing messages

10 Membership guidelines get CLC consensus

11 People of color discuss church structures

20 Family discipleship

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Yea and amen

I recall that, as a boy growing up in eastern Pennsylvania, after a sermon the other ministers and deacons would "give testimony that the spoken word was true and in accordance with Scripture" and would either begin or end their remarks with "Yea and amen to the spoken word." I often say that in my heart when I read your editorials and now tell you via these lines, especially for the Sept. 5 editorial ("Beyond Facts and Magic").

Thank you for calling for greater biblical literacy in our churches. Knowing what Scripture says is such a necessary ingredient in our decision making and knowing how to follow Christ. Thanks, too, for cautioning us against the two dangers of majoring in biblical facts or using the Bible as magic.

I wholeheartedly agree that we need to make more and better use of Scripture in our worship and to be more deliberate in studying Scripture in Sunday school and small-group settings. We tend to take the attitude that we don't need too much Scripture, that we know enough of what the Bible says or that there are other more important things to study.

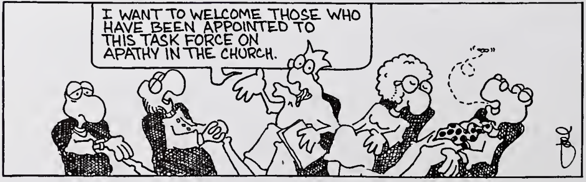
Thanks for the timely challenge.—*Henry Yoder, Peoria, Ariz.*

It isn't easy to talk or write about the Bible these days and be heard clearly. Thanks for taking the risk in the Sept. 5 editorial. I appreciate its pointing out the serious dangers of both magical approaches and biblical illiteracy.

An older brother in the church once gave me advice that has provided trustworthy footing ever since as I approach Scripture. He pointed to the old hymn "Break Thou the Bread of Life" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book*, No. 360) and encouraged me to meditate on the line, "Beyond the sacred page, I seek thee, Lord; my spirit pants for thee, O living Word."

What I long to see in the church is a thirst for the Word that leads to an encounter with Christ.—*Marlene Kropf, Elkhart, Ind.*

Pontius' Puddle by Joel Kauffmann


I WANT TO WELCOME THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN APPOINTED TO THIS TASK FORCE ON APATHY IN THE CHURCH.

Straight to the source

Re "An Open Letter to My Daughter on the Source of Evil" (Sept. 5): Arthur Paul Boers rightly indicates that Isaiah 45:7 is, in part, a response to Persian dualism. Isaiah, in effect has God saying: "I am the only source. There is no other. I create light and darkness, good and evil." John insists, "All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made" (John 1:3).

Perhaps the church hasn't given enough thought to the source or origin of evil. We don't, as some religions do, claim multiple gods: one for evil and another for good, although God vs. Satan can be viewed as a sort of dualism. The devil has, however, in recent times fallen out of favor. So how do we explain the entrance of evil into our world?

Why not, rejecting all dualistic thought, acknowledge with Isaiah and John that Yahweh created everything. There is no other creator. And although perhaps beyond our comprehension and hard to accept, consider that God in love may have created a world, a universe, with all the necessary ingredients to be the best possible testing ground to prepare us for the life to come. Created good and evil with the freedom to choose. Joy but also pain and suffering with the ability to endure and triumph. All for our good in the long run.

God can, of course, transform and bring good out of evil, and God will, I trust, in the end do just that.—*John A. Hertzler, Mathews, Va.*

Revive us again

Paul V. Springer's letter (Readers Say, Sept. 5) resonates with my thinking and analysis of late 20th- and early 21st-century Christianity as practiced by Mennonites and much of the rest of Christianity at this time. We have acquiesced to the spirit of the times and have allowed ourselves to become part of the hedonistic lifestyle that our prosperity has made possible. And at whose expense?

To be sure, as in the time of Elijah, there are, figuratively speaking, 7,000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal, but they were not enough to save Israel from judgment, and I cannot imagine that we will be spared unless we experience a mighty work of the Holy Spirit to revive us and turn our hearts away from such things as bigger houses and sport utility vehicles, immoral entertainment by movies or TV, or anything that turns our hearts away from God and our Savior Jesus Christ. Let us pray that God's Spirit will move

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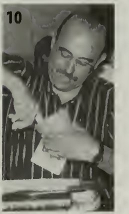
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readers say

upon his people so that they will follow his directions when he said, "If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14)—*James Faul, North Newton, Kan.*

The beat of a different drummer

Thank you for Shelly Cataldo's "Patience: The Endangered Virtue" (Aug. 15). The article asks us to examine our lifestyles from a more detached, even biblical, perspective. If we could watch ourselves from above, I think we might be embarrassed at how foolish we looking racing around from one gadget to the next. The more room we allow for the paraphernalia of consumer culture in our lives, the less room remains for the practice of Christian virtues. Rather than more conformed to the mind of Christ, we end up more shallow, flabby and plastic.

The metaphor of the ancient galley ships and our contemporary impulse to row along to the escalating drumbeat of our culture's pacesetters was particularly apt. We eventually become habituated to a comfortable slavery.

Cataldo's exercises for building our patience muscles were also helpful. Other options might include growing, cooking and preserving more of our own food; spending 15 minutes a day centering ourselves in God's presence through contemplative prayer; regularly getting outdoors and off the beaten path; taking up the discipline of an instrument, art form or sport; committing to some church activity beyond Sunday morning; and visiting folks who think, talk and move at a slower pace than ourselves.—*Kent Davis Sensenig, Cedar Falls, Iowa*

Cover photo by Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries

Calling the called

Anne Stuckey has helped change the system of calling people to pastoral ministry in the Mennonite Church.

by Christy Risser

Jeff Wright, a conference minister in the Pacific Southwest Conference, says, "Having a woman on the ministry services leadership team has been important for testosterone-free thinking about ministry." For nine years, Anne Stuckey has been the lone female voice on the Mennonite Church's denominational team that works to empower individuals in pastoral ministry.

In this role she also served as a pastor to conference ministers, such as Jeff. "[Anne] has been the primary pastoral person in my life," he says. "When I got the word Anne had resigned, I felt my pastor had resigned."

Serving as the director of Ministerial Leadership Services for Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM) since 1991, Anne has played an integral role in the lives of many conference ministers. In this role she served as a pastor to some of the conference ministers who, in turn, are pastors to those ministering in our conferences.

As the first woman in such a position in the Mennonite Church, Anne has altered a long-standing pattern of the way leadership is done in the Mennonite Church.

Pastoral care of conference ministers is shared among the four people serving in ministerial leadership offices. Dale Stoltzfus and Anne from MBCM, Henry Petkau from Mennonite Church Canada and Keith Harder from the General Conference Mennonite Church work as a team to create an environment in which ministers and potential ministers may thrive in the denomination. Anne began working half-time as an associate pastor at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold, Ohio, in July, and will move to full-time ministry there when her duties at MBCM end on Nov. 1.

Having grown up in the Baptist church, Anne found herself questioning a number of the church's theological positions in the midst of the Vietnam War. In 1973, she found herself enrolled as a 20-year-old student at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in the midst of the traditional system of ministerial training.

"No one tapped me on the shoulder to pastor," she says. "Instead I was affirmed for teaching. When I look back, it's amazing to me, the insidious power of not being tapped. Therefore I have to believe the power of being tapped for pastoral ministry must be incredible, for someone to see the gifts to us all."

Twenty-year-old system: Tapping is exactly what Stuckey found herself doing nearly 20 years later. As a part of her role in the ministerial leadership office, says MBCM president Everett Thomas, Anne changed the way the Mennonite Church does business. "Anne changed a nearly 20-year-old system," Everett says. "It was a system that was not prepared to decide if someone was fit for ministry. Anne brought change … by shaping a calling system that has integrity from top to bottom. She helps gently discern a candidate's readiness for ministry." In this new system, a candidate must be recommended by at least one conference minister.

Anne is also credited with transforming what was dubiously known as "the list."

According to Everett, in the old system, being placed on the list that MBCM released to churches looking for pastoral leadership was a dead end for candidates seeking ministry opportunities. Churches seeking new leadership found their candidates through an old boys network, he says.

Today, that same list is held in high regard by many, because churches now know that everyone on the list has undergone a process of discernment and has been recommended for ministry on many levels. Anne is integral to this discernment in that she processes all the applications of would-be ministers who wish to be added to the list.

"I see what she writes to candidates and am often moved by the insight and care she extends to candidates, even when we're telling them we cannot place them on the list," Everett says.

Throughout her tenure, Anne has shared this position with Dale Stoltzfus. Everett points to the success of their collaboration as evidence that men and women can "lead together

An important mentor: Anne Stuckey

with appropriate mutuality." The position Anne and Dale share was designed as a partnership from the beginning.

"I knew Anne as a fellow board member at AMBS," Dale says. "She was a pastor at a church in Iowa City, and I felt she would have gifts to give to the broader church."

As the first woman in such a position in the Mennonite Church, Anne has altered a longstanding pattern of the way leadership is done in the Mennonite Church, according to Everett. "Anne has enriched the denominational culture and provided a woman's voice at many important moments," he says. For example, she helped develop guidelines for credentialing pastors. She also provided, in a gentle, low-key way, "a voice for women in ministry," Everett says.

Rather than seeing herself as the main agent of change, Anne chooses instead to see the gifts the Mennonite Church has given her. "The Mennonite Church has been a gift to me," she says. "I value it, and I value the people along the way who have opened doors for me as an unlikely candidate, as a Baptist woman pastor."

Celebrate through parties: "As we have done seminars and writing together, it has been a privilege to model for the church how people can team together," Dale says. "This has been particularly true as it pertains to our being a team of a man and a woman. Anne has modeled a pastoral approach to team ministry for all four of us on the ministerial leadership team. As it relates to conference ministers, Anne has helped us think pastorally. She is often the first to remind us to celebrate through parties, or even a simple card, the contributions of conference ministers who are moving to other ministries."

Anne is quick to note that her leaving is in no way related to the current transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church. "It's just time for me to take on a different pastoral role," she says. "I am a minister, and I have worked hard to listen to God's call in my life, and this is where I'm being led. There will be many parts of this work that I will miss, but I must be faithful to God's leading in my life, or there is no integrity in what I've been telling ministerial candidates for the past nine years."

Everett and Dale are working with conference ministers to find another person to fill the void Anne will leave. As a conference minister who views the person in that office as integral to his ability to do his job more effectively, Jeff says that finding a woman to complement Dale's abilities and gifts is of great importance. "Having a woman on that team expands the possibilities and the capabilities of that team." Jeff says.

Everett, too, feels that Anne's perspective as a woman has greatly enriched the ministerial leadership office's ability to cultivate leadership for the Mennonite Church. "Anne has been an important mentor to other women through ministerial leadership; particularly women serving as conference ministers," he says.

Pastors need to call out pastors. Leadership must beget leadership, or we will find ourselves with fewer leaders than God is calling to leadership. An outer as well as an inner calling must exist. This is God's work.—*Anne Stuckey*

"Anne modeled for us all a means of doing the position in such a way as to make it easier for the next person to fill her position," Dale says. "I feel strongly that we need the presence of a woman on our ministerial leadership team."

Anne says that as she makes the transition to congregational pastoral ministry, she intends to follow the advice she has given pastors for nearly a decade.

"Pastors need to call out pastors," she says. "Leadership must beget leadership, or we will find ourselves with fewer leaders than God is calling to leadership. An outer as well as an inner calling must exist. This is God's work. It's not my work, but I hope that I can, as congregational pastor, facilitate that holy work and encourage the gifts I see in the congregation at Zion."

Christy Risser is a freelance writer and photographer living in New England.

Nourishing message

How to help girls avoid our culture's traps about body image and self-worth

by Phyllis Edgerly Ring

The Word of God tells us we are all created in God's image. Yet our culture of conflicting messages seems to contradict this at every turn.

The average women's magazine cover promises a diet plan that can't fail—and pictures a dessert that will never be part of it. Or it portrays a model whose body type is possessed by 5 percent of the population—or no one at all. Experts say it's a picture-perfect setup for eating disorders.

Few are more vulnerable than those who have the least life experience. And if they're young and female, chances are that society is already sending them some other mixed messages, too.

When girls begin to 'disappear'

Catherine Steiner-Adair, director of education at the Harvard Eating Disorders Center, researches the cultural trends that discourage girls from expressing themselves freely or behaving assertively. She describes a connection between these messages and girls' efforts to control eating and body size.

Girls do a good job of expressing themselves until they reach preadolescence, when they encounter what she calls the "tyranny of kind and nice."

"Society sends them a clear message that in order to be listened to, they have to posture themselves correctly," she says. "They begin to mimic older women by suppressing anger, hiding their feelings and feigning happiness.

A Harvard Eating Disorders Center study found that 31 percent of 10-year-old girls say they fear being fat, and 52 percent of 14-year-old girls feel better about themselves if they're dieting.

"A 9-year-old will tell you, 'I think …' but by 11 or 12, a girl is more likely to say, 'I don't know. …' "

As her voice begins to disappear, a girl may try to "shrink" in other ways, Steiner-Adair says.

When they don't feel acceptance for expressing themselves, girls often seek shelter in some form of control. The most common focus is their bodies and eating.

"Add to this a constant media barrage of an unattainable ideal of female beauty and you have the makings of a very destructive situation," says Steiner-Adair.

Media analyst Jean Kilbourne's documentary film *Slim Hopes* alerted Americans to the body images that help the dieting industry flourish, keep women frustrated and put young girls at risk.

"The body type most commonly pictured—tall, slender, broad-shouldered, narrow-hipped—is one that belongs genetically to a very small percent of the total population," Kilbourne says. "But it's the only one we ever see. Or worse, with computer-engineered images, we see 'models' composed from up to seven different images, 'bodies' that aren't physically possible without plastic surgery."

In the pursuit of such impossible standards, increasing numbers of girls view dieting as a necessity and experience eating disorders that are destroying the health of their still-developing bodies. A Harvard Eating Disorders Center study found that 31 percent of 10-year-old girls say they fear being fat, and 52 percent of 14-year-old girls feel better about themselves if they're dieting.

How can adults help young people avoid these traps?

A strategy of informed intervention and conscious role-modeling can help girls bypass potential eating disorders and adopt the balanced approach to living that God desires for us:

- Acquaint girls with facts that offset advertising hype. Use teachable moments to point out how mixed messages and false images target them specifically.
- Capitalize on the importance of the mother-daughter relationship. This is where girls learn most life skills. What many learn is to eat compulsively, shop and obsess about weight. What girls could be learning from their mothers is that the greatest source of joy and nourishment comes from a life grounded in faith.
- Create opportunities for girls to express themselves authentically and feel accepted for doing so. One mother began by sharing with her preteen a workplace problem about which she was praying for guidance. The daughter's ideas led to a unique solution and ongoing communication that benefits them both.
- Effective self-expression is a learned activity. Foster self-confidence by offering girls support and guidance about how to handle difficult situations. Coach them on how to speak up when it's scary to share something or how to express concern about an issue or problem

without jeopardizing a friendship.

- Monitor what you do and say. Eighty percent of women who were asked what they wish for most said "to be thin" or "to lose weight." Girls aren't the only ones affected by unrealistic cultural norms. Are we talking about body size and dieting all the time? Do we perpetuate the idea that diet products can somehow save us? Shouldn't we rather model self-acceptance, balanced eating and moderate exercise as options?
- Remember that the younger a child the more literally she interprets what she hears. Adults are the closest thing children have to a perfect standard. When an 8-year-old hears her mother, who thinks she's 10 pounds too heavy, say she's fat, what does this tell the daughter about her own developmental pudginess? How might our actions reflect the belief that each of us is created in the image of a loving God?
- Encourage pursuits that diversify girls' experiences and fortify their emotional strengths. Psychologist Mary Pipher, author of *Reviving Ophelia: Saving the Selves of Adolescent Girls*, recommends involving them in activities that develop their talents and interests, especially physical ones, such as sports, which reinforce both inner and outer strengths.
- Expand and bolster girls' self-concept, Pipher also advises, by increasing their interaction with age groups other than their own—from elders to toddlers—through friendships and volunteer work.
- Adopt a mentorship role, whether or not you're a parent. Adolescents often listen to a teacher or other adult more receptively than they do to their parents. And becoming mindful about what we say and do for young people's sake is one of the greatest ways to overcome our own self-defeating attitudes and habits.

Phyllis Edgerly Ring lives in Exeter, N.H.

MENNOS AT WORK

Raymond Kurtz, Salem, Ohio

Congregation: Leetonia Mennonite Church, Salem, Ohio

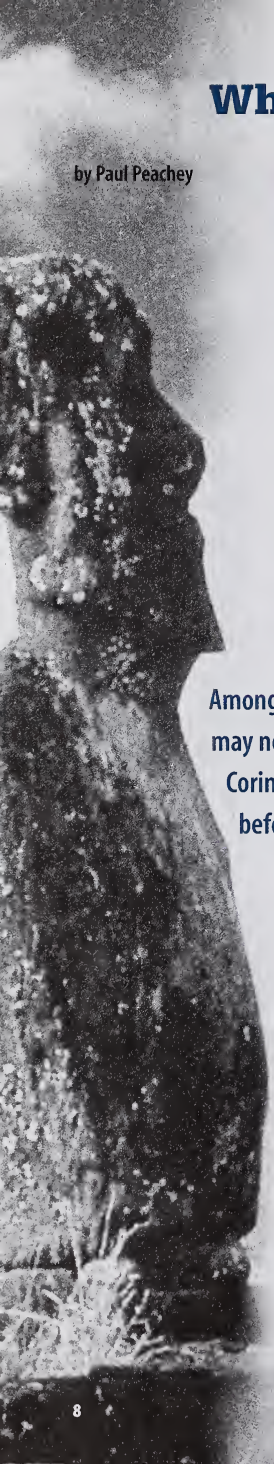
Occupation: volunteer fire fighter and farmer

Years in occupation: fire fighter, 49; farmer, 55

Why I do what I do: I became a volunteer fire fighter when the Korean War started and our township fire department felt the need to increase the number of fire fighters available in case of emergency. Later the department got an ambulance, and I was an emergency medical technician for nine years. A lot of training is required to be a fire fighter and more to be an EMT. We get an average of three calls per week. Often as fire fighters we assist EMTs in extrication of victims of auto accidents and help with traffic control. We receive no remuneration for our services. We go anytime there is a call, regardless of what we are working at and whatever time of day or night we are needed.

The role of faith in what I do: I believe all we do as fire fighters is helping others in their times of need. I am able to be a good witness to these victims and in my association with the other fire fighters.

Tell us about your work, why you do it and the role of faith in it. Write to Gordon Houser, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, <gordonh@gcmc.org>. Please include a photo of yourself.



When idols sneak back in

When we deify (absolutize) our perceptions and definitions, we fall into idolatry.

by Paul Peachey

The worship of idols was discredited long ago. Who in our society would be caught worshiping a hand-carved or cast-iron image? But what about more subtle or backhanded idolatry? Of course, there's always the possibility the love of money or pleasure or fame eclipses love for God, be it ever so slight. But what about our acts of Christian piety, our doctrines, rituals, even our use of Bible texts?

Humans are free, but our freedom is limited. And to exercise freedom we need an anchored identity and stars to steer by. Both identity and stars derive from God, who transcends all. And in ways adapted to our finitude, God the infinite is revealed to us. But our grasp and definition of such revelations remain finite. Insofar as we deify (absolutize) our perceptions and definitions, we fall into idolatry.

Awareness of mystery or reality beyond the visible world appears deeply embedded in human consciousness. During the early stages of history, human options appeared limited, largely determined by the immediate circumstances of time and place. Often the divine was seen as somehow present or embodied in particular events or objects, whether natural or crafted. Challenging such embodiment is a central theme in the Bible. From the first two commandments (Exodus 20) to Jesus' characterization of the kingdom of God (John 3:3; Luke 17:20), the crusade against idolatry grows ever more persistent.

Among our several Mennonite bodies, we may need a long recess, with the whole of 1 Corinthians 3 under our pillows, to reflect before we further divide—or merge.

Our human predicament: While the biblical story is relentlessly aniconic (against images), it nonetheless appears ambiguous in this regard. In ancient Israel, while idols were cast out, new symbols and rites were introduced—altars, sacrifices, tabernacle, temple and, in the end, even a king. All too easily, these became idolatrous as well. Eventually, in Old Testament prophecy, those innovations were surpassed, and in the Christian dispensation, interpreted as having been merely a "schoolmaster" (Galatians 3:24 KJV) to bring us to Christ. It is through transformation from within—the new birth rather than through some external ritual or rule—that we are led into the reign of God announced and inaugurated by Jesus the Christ.

Yet even here ambiguity does not disappear. There is a message, a gospel, sent into the world. This means language and practice, and these need testing. There are true and false prophets and teachings. So we must "test the spirits" (1 John 4:1). Even when all material objects are eliminated from religious practice, we're still not immune to idolatry. Sooner or later we each tend to argue that my views, my interpretations (or those of the group to which I belong) are right; yours (or your group's) are suspect. With this question we must wrestle generation by generation until the eschaton (the end) (1 Corinthians 15:52).

Idolatry is not a packaged evil that can be dumped once and for all. Our life with others requires common understandings and commitments as well as a readiness to defer to the needs or preferences of others. Even where we subscribe to common beliefs, our understandings and formulations vary individually.

According to 1 Corinthians 12, these differences become gifts that we bring into the community, where they are tempered by assimilation to the common good. The hand cannot dismiss the foot, and neither can claim to be self-sufficient. Here the rubber hits the road. At what point does my vision or gift—and my insistence on drawing the line accordingly—become idolatry? We must ask, When do statements of faith or creeds on the basis of which we unite and divide, become idolatrous?

Our Anabaptist (Mennonite) problem: The Reformation of the 16th century was a complex upheaval, as was the rise of the Anabaptist movement within it. A useful reading of our Anabaptist origins sees it as a renunciation of the idolatrous features of Christendom.

After the resurrection, Jesus ascended to "the right hand of the Father." Though born at Pentecost with the descent of the Holy Spirit on the gathering in Jerusalem (Acts 2), the church was described from the beginning as "the body of Christ." Thereafter his presence in the world is said to be manifest in the believing community. But how? And given the diverse claims that bombard us continuously, how do we distinguish between the authentic and the inauthentic? In the course of the early centuries, an intriguing, though scripturally unsubstantiated, solution emerged. It was proposed that the church was founded by Jesus as a historical community, and on his departure he passed his founding leadership to Peter. By design, that leadership was to be transmitted in direct succession from generation to generation. By the fourth century, Christianity had become so widespread in the Roman Empire that its rulers decided it would be better to adopt it than to fight it. Thereby Christianity became the imperial religion. Political power now secured the monopoly of the church.

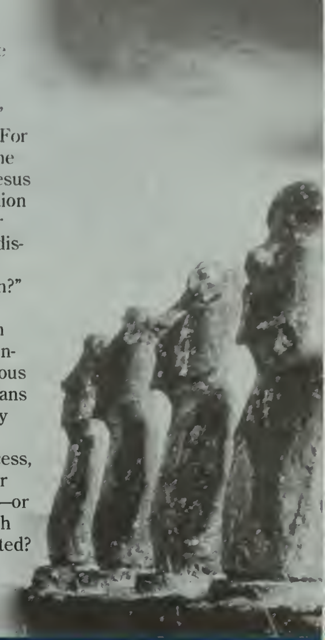
By the 16th century, rising dissatisfaction with the resulting perversions, stimulated in part by spiritual renewal, led to widespread upheaval, particularly north of the Alps. Tension mounted. The papacy and the Reformers, led by Luther, excommunicated each other. A threatened breakdown of public order followed. Luther and others in his position ceded the visible structures of church life to the temporal (social and political) sphere. Accordingly they called on princes and magistrates to enforce religious uniformity as a means to political order. A vigorous minority, known as the Anabaptists, rose in dissent. The gospel, they argued—now increasingly translated into the vernacular and printed, distributed, read and discussed—required the disengagement of the two spheres. When they proceeded to act accordingly (Matthew 18:20), the axe of persecution fell.

Heroic stories: It was easier, of course, to reject medieval Christendom than to create a new alternative. There are the heroic stories, transmitted in *Martyrs Mirror* and other accounts, of the many hundreds of Anabaptists, later called Mennonites, put to death for trying. Many others were imprisoned, driven from their homes, their country, with their property confiscated. Small groups survived in remote or mountainous areas, where they developed creatively ordered communities. As such, they were welcomed as pioneering colonies in newly developing lands.

At the same time, harassment and isolation across generations took their spiritual toll. To (over)simplify: Whereas pre-Reformation Christendom tended to sacrifice the "not-being-of-the-world" dimension of faith to "being-in-the-world" (John 17), Mennonites and Amish tended to develop the opposite extreme. My father grew up in the Amish world of the Kishacoquillas Valley in central Pennsylvania. He told the story of a schism that occurred in that world over the color of buggies. One group stood for yellow buggies ("gehl Wagli"), the other for white buggies ("weiss Wagli"). We chuckle. But as we draw lines and fences between ourselves and others, or splits within Anabaptist communities, where does idolatry set in? Let us also affirm that in all our sects, from Amish to Roman Catholic, there are people who hear and receive the gospel and are accepted of God, despite the idolatrous confusions that may intrude in those groupings.

With fondness we quote Menno Simons' choice of 1 Corinthians 3:11 as his motto: "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ." But that text climaxes Paul's rejection of Christians becoming followers of Paul or Apollos, one in preference of the other. In dissolving into followings—yellow buggies vs. white buggies—"are you not merely human?" (1 Corinthians 3:4b). It's ironic that as a denomination we bear the name of the man who, against the backdrop of a humanly constructed Christendom, reasserted the obvious fact that separate followings among Christians are merely humanly grounded—"wood, hay and stubble" (3:12). Among our several Mennonite bodies, we may need a long recess, with the whole of 1 Corinthians 3 under our pillows, to reflect before we further divide—or merge. How does either activity square with the foundation that Menno Simons celebrated?

Paul Peachey lives in Harpers Ferry, W.Va.



For Uncle Victor

by Stephen Penner

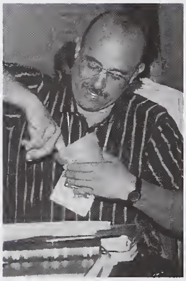
Grandma stands behind her children with
thin hands resting on two young shoulders.
She stares at the camera and wonders
why we take pictures of death anyhow.
She is dressed in Sunday best without a
tear for they have all been dabbed away.
She has been told to pose this way with
her three girls and her two boys
and in front, her sixth child, little Victor.
Victor is dead and I can still see the top
of his forehead just beyond the front lip
of the casket centered in the old photograph.

That night Grandma must have cried again
remembering what it was like to grow round
and give birth. While you grew sickly
she held you, Victor, and bathed your body
with warm water before surrounding you
with a thin towel and welcoming you
into the warmth of her body.

This was her gift, not anything that could be spoken,
but simply present in the quiet of her breathing.
It was there when she cradled you
that last evening before she gave you
to your bed for a good night's sleep.

Stephen Penner lives in Reedley, Calif.

New membership guidelines receive consensus but little enthusiasm from CLC representatives



Rich Preheim

Juan Montes applies glue to a broken pot during the Constituency Leaders Council meeting Sept. 12-13. Each table at the meeting had a broken pot, representing our brokenness, which participants were encouraged to put together. Montes was a CLC representative from AMIGA, the General Conference Mennonite Church Hispanic group.

PARKVILLE, Mo.—Mired in disagreements over if and how strongly membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA should address homosexuality, the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) has taken a middle-of-the-road approach.

Meeting Sept. 12-13 at a Presbyterian retreat center near Kansas City, CLC members backed proposed guidelines with a controversial section on homosexuality that some think is too weak and others think shouldn't be included. But given their differences, they agreed with resignation that the plan is as good as can be hoped for to present at next summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn.

"The document is not perfect, but we are willing to go back and support it," said Ohio Conference representative Wanda Stopher.

The proposed membership guidelines now go to the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board before going to the delegates at Nashville.

While the rest of the guidelines deals with the broad basics of denominational membership, the last of the document's three sections seeks to clarify Mennonite Church USA's "beliefs and practices … regarding the matter of homosexuality, particularly as it touches on issues of church membership." Unlike the first two sections, the third has been the source of much disagreement.

The section upholds a number of statements, including the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective and the Saskatoon and Purdue statements on sexuality. The statement also includes a prohibition on credentialed people conducting same-sex covenant ceremonies and instructions for denominational membership of dual-conference congregations that were disciplined by one area conference but not the other.

Some CLC members questioned emphasizing homosexuality in a document about membership. "Why do we have one particular thing?" asked Eastern District representative David Hersh.

Larry Hauder of Pacific Northwest Conference said the guidelines' third section was not about membership but about housekeeping. "It's the denomination telling the congregations and conferences how to keep house," he said.

But other CLC members thought the section did not go far enough in its clarifications. "When we read this, we see the possibility that before too long, we have practicing homosexuals, same-sex couples validated. … We see that before too long we have practicing homosexuals in the pulpit," said Lancaster Conference representative Lindsey Robinson. "We're reluctant to enter into a marriage like this unless we take some precautions."

Elaine Bryant from Illinois Conference also used the marriage analogy. "I don't think there's a pastor here who would counsel someone to enter a marriage without dealing with glaring issues," she said.

Yet it was apparent those glaring issues would not be resolved. "It is our perception that those who like section three out can live with it in, but those who want it in cannot live with it out," said Tom Kauffman from Ohio.

Western District representative Marv Zehr, an advocate of congregational autonomy, called the guidelines "as good as we can come up with."

Robinson agreed. "This is the best we're going to do," he said. "Let's take it to Nashville and let the chips fall where they may."

He admitted that concerns about the guidelines' third section could eventually prompt Lancaster to withdraw from Mennonite Church USA. Representatives from North Central and Southeast also said their conferences' future in the denomination was hanging in the balance.

The direction set by the first two sections of the guidelines will be incorporated into the proposed bylaws for the denomination. But it is unclear what status the third section—which will be reviewed after six years—will have.

"I don't understand guidelines as law," said Mary Ellen Meyer of Indiana-Michigan Conference. "I understand guidelines to be something that you take into account."

The meeting was the CLC's first since May, when members recommended guidelines requiring all current General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church members to choose to join the new denomination rather than automatically being included. The plan had been drawn up by a CLC committee, which had assumed responsibility for the guidelines following last year's GC-MC convention. But shortly after the May meeting, the "opt-in" idea was scuttled on legal grounds because the new entity cannot be created without members.

If approved by both GC and MC delegates

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Honoring MC and GC traditions in the new church

When we cut down a tree to make room for the new, the stump is hard to get rid of. We can cut the tree close to the ground, mow over it or remove it, but the stump remains.

The tree stump represents the past, the rootedness, the heritage and tradition that will endure over time. It represents continuity. Tradition exists because it is constantly produced and reproduced, pruned and softened to absorb revitalizing elements.

As Mennonite believers, MC and GC, we share many traditions:

a Biblical and Christian tradition,
an Anabaptist tradition,
a nonviolent peacemaking tradition,
a relief and service tradition,
a mission and evangelism tradition,
a global tradition,
a tradition of caring and hospitality,
a tradition of Christian ethics,
a singing and praying tradition,
a tradition as people of the Word.

We share a tradition of those who desire to be faithful. Indeed, it is the tradition of God's grace.

My dear brothers and sisters, let us honor the stump. Let's remember the traditions that have been fed by the roots of our faith. The roots that go deep and define our faith. The tradition of God's grace and mercy is the stump from which our new church will grow.

At Gathering 2000 held at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind., more than 1,000 delegates from four area conferences in the Midwest heard a proposal for creating a new Great Lakes Conference. Nine mission districts will each include cells of five to nine congregations.

From a sermon by June Alliman Yoder preached at the Rocky Mountain Mennonite Conference congregational gathering in Denver, Colo., May 5. June is Associate Professor of Preaching and Communication at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS).

Area conferences move forward

- **Pacific Southwest Mennonite Conference delegates declared themselves "in" the new Mennonite Church USA at their June 23-25 assembly in Reedley, Calif.**
- **The Northern District Conference (GC) and Iowa-Nebraska Conference (MC) merged into the Central Plains Conference during their joint meeting in Freeman, S.D., June 22-25.**
- **Delegates of Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences (MC) and Central District Conference (GC) in Goshen, Ind., June 22-24, heard plans to create a 33,000 member Great Lakes Mennonite Conference.**
- **In Tulsa, Okla., July 7-9, delegates from Western District (GC) and South Central Conference (MC) met together to review preliminary plans to form a new area conference.**
- **In Hickory, N.C., July 20, Virginia Mennonite Conference (MC) delegates agreed to "remain engaged as a community of grace in the on-going discernment process regarding membership guidelines."**

> **"Mutuality in mission. We are increasingly aware that every location is a mission location. This means that the mission field is also in the neighborhoods in which our congregations in North America are located. The church in every continent is thus called to give and receive in mission. Mission insights and workers from other countries should be important resources to support mission in North America. This calls us to a true mutuality in the global Mennonite mission family."**
>
> ***– excerpted from a mission transformation proposal***

Sharing Jesus with others: 'We must work together'

"We must work together." Although spoken in French, the imperative call from a Congolese Mennonite resounded unambiguously among more than 200 Anabaptists from 45 countries, gathered in Guatemala in July to envision greater collaboration in mission.

"We must work together. We don't have a choice. We can't do anything else. We are a family," said Nzash Lumeya, a theology professor from the Democratic Republic of Congo. "There are 70 percent of the world who have never heard of Jesus Christ. We cannot put an embargo on 70 percent of the world. It's what we're required to do as Anabaptist followers of Jesus. May the Lord bless us and give us the strength to work together."

Lumeya's impassioned plea touched the hearts of participants from 60 Mennonite communions attending the Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation, held July 12-16. Sponsored by Mennonite World Conference and the Council of International Ministries (the North American Mennonite mission agencies), the gathering brought together representatives of 1 million Anabaptists from six continents (more than half from the southern and eastern hemispheres).

Leaders gather at July 2000 global Anabaptist missions consultation

"It is a day of rejoicing, a day in which we can anticipate the whole church bearing the whole gospel to the whole world," said consultation co-chair Stanley W. Green, president of Mennonite Board of Missions.

A "continuation committee" will review the consultation's input, drafting a formal proposal for greater collaboration by the 2003 assembly of Mennonite World Conference in Zimbabwe. "I am praying that when we meet three years from now we can talk about the experiences we've had because of this vision," Lumeya said.

Mennonite Church USA

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First fruits giving in a transformed Mennonite Church

The ideas of *first fruits* and *first fruits* living found invigoration and excitement in the work of Lynn Miller and *The Giving Project: growing faithful stewards in the church.* Now this *first fruits* perspective is being placed at the heart of the new funding system for Mennonite Church USA.

Households, congregations, area conferences and ministry organizations at all levels, including the executive board, are invited to be generous beyond themselves with financial resources, that is, to be *first fruits* organizations.

A *first fruits* funding model adds strength and integrity to stewardship education. Ministry organizations, that is, the churchwide program agencies, then do what they are asking others to do – give from the first and best. Ministry organizations that traditionally have found it difficult to raise funds because of the nature of their work no longer work in competition with those with a consistent funding base.

Join us on the transformation journey...
envisioning
healing & hope

Working together for a common mission becomes the entire focus of the church, rather than a "divide, conquer and compete" attitude to raise funds for a particular project or agency. The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board fulfills its *first fruits* giving by bringing a *first fruits* gift to Mennonite World Conference for use around the world.

The funding system is a voluntary one. It is based on our belief that we are God's people who trust God for provision as we carry out God's work. As God's people, we do not hoard resources – not for ourselves, not for our congregations and not for our ministry organizations. As we give out these blessings, we believe God's promise that God will provide and even increase our capacity to give further.

Strong and effective ministerial leaders are vital part of the new church

Ephesians 2 says that God has "given gifts that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ." Many of us could point to evangelists who led us to faith, pastors who nurtured our faith, prophets and teachers who challenged us to greater commitment, leaders with apostolic faith who led us in service and mission. We have been equipped for mission and service, to build up the body of Christ.

Mennonites have a tradition of strong ministerial leadership, but there are challenges ahead. Some young people report that they are not being encouraged to consider pastoral ministry. There are too many involuntary terminations of pastors and instances of ministerial misconduct. We are sometimes ambivalent about leadership and how much authority our leaders should have. Still, in the face of these multiple challenges and conflicting expectations, pastors, chaplains and conference ministers continue to serve with joy and effectiveness.

Strong and effective ministerial leaders will be vital ingredients in the new Mennonite Church. Without Godly and effective ministers, God's people will drift and be ill-equipped for the challenges and opportunities facing them. In response to this need, Mennonite Church USA will continue to provide leadership and resources for congregations and ministers that will equip pastors as effective caregivers and missional leaders, help congregations call pastors and help enrich the relationship between pastors and the congregations they serve.

The Ministry Inquiry Program helps students from Mennonite colleges test their calling and gifts for pastoral ministry. About 30 students participated in the program this summer including Daniel Cruz, a Goshen College student from Lancaster, Pa., shown here with Firman Gingerich, pastor of College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

God continues to call apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers "to equip the saints for ministry." For its fruitfulness and faithfulness, Mennonite Church USA must encourage and support those whom God is calling to these ministries.

God's audacious plans for the new church

Our entire faith is founded upon the incarnation, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is "God with us." God's preference for working with flesh and blood continues in us.

Examples of God's "incarnational bent" abound. Elijah, hiding in a cave, did not find God in the thunderous noise of nature, but only in a "still, small voice" – a human attribute. So God chooses again and again to proceed "by the power at work within us...to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine..."(Ephesians 3:20).

"Audacious" is the word I use to describe what God is attempting through our transformation. God has more plans for us than we can possibly see now.

God is building a new denomination through us. In that aspiration some believe we are swimming upstream. "People only think locally these days," they say. Despite this skepticism we are reaching out, at God's leading, to reaffirm an even more expansive community of faith.

God's enlarged reach takes us from the smaller scope of "mission boards" to the audacious goal of being a "missional church." Our mission call becomes part of the DNA of the community of believers.

No longer can we be satisfied with only providing mutual aid. We are surrounding that ministry with a reach for the greater call of "stewardship." We engage not only in a ministry of helping each other. We reach for "new minds" (Romans 12:2) about the meaning of our time, talent, treasure and our stewardship of the Gospel.

God asks us to expand our understanding of God's call. Our new language goes to the heart of who we are and what we do in all things. This kind of community-building claims the name of transformation because it can only happen by the power and leading of the Holy Spirit working in and through us.

Jim Schrag is project director for the Transformation Team. He has recently been appointed executive director for Mennonite Church USA following Nashville 2001.

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(proposed mission statement for Mennonite Church USA)

Is God calling you to Nashville?

It will be a historic assembly, July 2-7, 2001, when two Mennonite denominations – the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Mennonite Church – are transformed into the new Mennonite Church USA.

It will be hard work, but there will be great joy when two faith families with so many shared traditions are blended into one greater witness for the glory of God.

Birthing this 'new thing' may mean there will be some labor pains – for example, the details of the membership guidelines and the legalities of merging two entities – but we can be sure it will be God's work in Nashville.

When assembly planners for Nashville 2001 met in recent weeks with members of the Nashville fellowship, Harmony Mennonite Church, it was evident that God is the one leading us to this place at this time. God has already been at work in Nashville, preparing the way for us and for our witness of unity, love and peace to this city; preparing us to be a blessing and to receive a blessing.

In the coming weeks, you will receive more details about registration, lodging and ministry opportunities for Nashville 2001. Is God calling you to Nashville for the work of the church, for laughter and play with your brothers and sisters in Christ and for the joy of being and receiving a blessing in this city?

If so, let your congregation or area conference know soon, and encourage others to be a part of this historic assembly.

Mennonite Church
USA

at Nashville, the current guidelines state that all current GC and MC members will become members of the new denomination, although by different processes:

GC congregations will automatically have full membership upon passage of both delegate bodies. But passage only guarantees MC area conferences five-year provisional denominational membership. To gain full membership, the conferences will have to take another action prior to Feb. 1, 2002, the official start-up date for Mennonite Church USA.

That MC stipulation was included to allow MC area conferences, which have expressed the greatest hesitation about joining the new denomination, opportunity to consider next steps should the guidelines pass. Some CLC members criticized the idea, calling for uniformity in both the GC and MC process.

The meeting also included pleas to move beyond stereotypes and misperceptions over homosexuality. Because GC area conferences have not disciplined congregations that accept noncelibate homosexuals as members, they are viewed with suspicion, Zehr said.

"One of the things that pains me ... is the implication that Western District Conference and the General Conference don't take the confession of faith seriously," he said. "We do."

Ralph Lehman of Franklin Conference responded: "I have come to believe what Marv says is true. ... I think the point of contention is how we perceive the General Conference Mennonite Church speaking into the life of the congregation. The perception, right or wrong, is that they are not."

But Meyer said: "It is not only GCs that are being told they do not support the confession of faith. ... It goes across both denominations."
—Rich Preheim

People of color discuss church structures

PARKVILLE, Mo.—The best way for Mennonite Church USA to serve people of color is with an Office of Multicultural Ministries and an accompanying advisory council, said participants at a Sept. 11 meeting to discuss the place for non-Anglos in the new denomination's structure.

But some participants also urged finding new ways to incorporate African-Americans, Native Americans, Hispanics and others into the new church other than just the traditional racial/ethnic groups.

The meeting participants—African, African-American, Anglo, Asian, Hispanic and Native American—examined several options proposed by the Transformation Team, which is directing the process of creating Mennonite Church USA out of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church.

According to the option receiving the greatest support, each of the four main groups of people of color—African-American, Asian, Hispanic and Native American—would have a staff person in the office. Another one to two staff members would work in the interest of people of color not organized into groups. The office would also have an advisory group and the denominational anti-racism team.

Yet to be determined is how the current associate groups, such as the African-American Mennonite Association and Mennonite Indian Leaders Council, would fit into the structure. One suggestion had the Office of Multicultural Ministries staff members also serving as staff for the groups.

But the historical dominance of those groups was challenged during the meeting. Joe Manickam, a native of Thailand who has lived in India and now resides in Pasadena, Calif., said there are no groups for internationals like him—and their numbers are increasing.

Rich Preheim

Kuaying Teng of General Conference Mennonite Church-affiliated Lao Mennonite Ministries (center) speaks during a Sept. 11 meeting of people of color to discuss their place in the structure of Mennonite Church USA. Teng is flanked by Nhein Huu Pham of the North American Vietnamese Fellowship (left) and Transformation Team director Jim Schrag.

"The issues we struggle with are very different than what the associate groups bring to the church," he said. "Biological classifications make no sense and they aren't biblical."

Gilberto Flores, director of the Commission on Home Ministries' Hispanic Resources Ministries, argued for greater integration of people into all aspects of church life. "Sometimes when we create boxes, we create racism and we promote it," he said.

But Leslie Francisco III, president of the African-American Mennonite Association, said, "[The church] is more sensitive because these groups existed."

Zenebe Abebe, who was born in Ethiopia and is now an administrator at Goshen (Ind.) College, agreed but said, "What we're trying to suggest is what is the best way to network and work together."

The proposal will undergo further revision and testing.*—Rich Preheim*

Transformation casualties continue

As progress continues in the creation of Mennonite Church USA, defections mount.

The Hopewell District of Atlantic Coast Conference announced on Sept. 10 its intention to withdraw and start a new association by next spring, ACC conference minister Warren Tyson reported during the Constituency Leaders Council (CLC) meeting Sept. 12-13.

"The primary reason for this change is that of differing vision and values within our present denominational structure," according to a letter from district leaders.

Hopewell has 10 congregations and two church plants with 1,500 members and an average Sunday attendance of 2,500.

Virginia Conference is expecting the withdrawal of its Cornerstone District, conference minister Owen Burkholder told the CLC meeting. Cornerstone includes five congregations and 1,000 members.

A Sept. 30 meeting in Paradise, Pa., will explore the possible creation of an Association of Evangelical Mennonite Congregations, partly in response to Mennonite Church USA.

"Various congregations are looking for an affiliation in which they feel comfortable ... grounded in orthodoxy and the worthy tenets of Anabaptism," steering committee member Eric Kouns told *Mennonite Weekly Review*.*—Rich Preheim*

African embraces Anabaptist dream

Founder of Ivory Coast church finds global community

Raymond Affouka Eba once had all the privileges that came with being the only son of a powerful man in Ivory Coast. He gave them up to become a child in God's family.

After becoming a Christian in 1984, he became a leader in the country's leading independent Baptist group. In 1995, he founded the Protestant Anabaptist Church of Ivory Coast, which has grown to 1,600 members in nine congregations and many prayer groups.

Eba's conversion to Christianity cost him family ties and endangered his life, he said. Members of the group he belonged to before he became a Christian "climbed a ladder leading to greater stages of demonic activity and finally to human sacrifice," he says. "Since leaving that group, I've feared for my own life.

"I was also rejected by my family, because I was seen as having abandoned them. My family inheritance was confiscated. ... If I had remained in politics, I would have been helpful to my family. But now I have become less profitable in their eyes."

But Christianity has given him much more: God's riches and a place in the global Anabaptist family. Eba attended July's Global Anabaptist Mission Consultation and Mennonite World Conference meetings in Guatemala City to build ties with other Anabaptists, discuss possibly joining MWC and strengthen his own Anabaptist convictions.

Those convictions were born out of frustration with what Eba considered superficial Christianity. "As a Baptist, there was a lot of emphasis on salvation but little attention paid to discipleship and the training of new converts," says Eba, pastor of a 150-member congregation in Yopougon. "It was all about having a big church and a big name but nothing about growing in Jesus."

In 1994, Eba started his congregation in Yopougon, a suburb of the southern coastal city of Abidjan. But he didn't have a name for it.

Then Eba dreamed one night that he should use the word Anabaptist. He resisted at first, because dreams had played a big part in the secret group he renounced.

"I had a problem, because I had put dreams behind me, but here God was sending me an image with this word written on a long scroll of paper," Eba says.

He grappled with what to do but decided in 1995 to use the name.

Eba knew about Anabaptists because he had learned about them when he taught church history to the Baptists. But until the dream, he hadn't realized his convictions so closely identified with the 16th-century Anabaptist principles of community, adult baptism and nonviolence. But even after making these connections and using the name, he still hadn't met any modern-day Anabaptists. God soon led him to some.

A student at the Abidjan-based Evangelical Center for Formation in Communication for Africa saw Eba's sign for the Protestant Anabaptist Church and told James Krabill, a Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) worker teaching at ECFCA at the time. Correspondence led to a meeting between Krabill and Eba in the fall of 1995.

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Eba

Before leaving Africa in 1996, Krabill—now MBM's vice president for mission advocacy and communications in Elkhart, Ind.—connected Eba with other ECFCA professors sympathetic with Anabaptism. Krabill also pointed Eba to books on Anabaptism and alerted other Anabaptist leaders around the world to the growing church in Ivory Coast.

MBM has supported the Protestant Anabaptist Church by providing a traveling sound system for open-air services. Three MBM workers in Abidjan provide classes and seminars on leadership development. MBM also plans to send a building team to Ivory Coast next year to help the the Anabaptist network build its first meetinghouse.

Through Krabill, Eba has met other Anabaptist leaders, who also help nurture and guide him. Eba was grateful for the opportunity to attend the Guatemala meetings. "Meetings like this make me feel a whole community is behind me," he says.

Most important for Eba in Guatemala was the emphasis on peace and justice. "One of the biggest challenges in the Ivory Coast is the influence of Islam and much violence," he says. "I am trying to teach my followers that we can't make any true changes through violence."

Says Krabill, "An Anabaptist presence is needed in Ivory Coast, and Eba is about building that."—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

Inspectors volunteer to save MCC meat

Ontario food inspectors have gone the extra mile so more Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) canned meat can go to hungry people around the world.

Inspectors had discovered some defective seals on cans canned earlier this year in Guelph and Leamington. The inspectors could have allowed MCC volunteers to inspect the seal of each can and eliminate those cans not properly sealed. The inspectors then could have randomly selected cans. Had only one defective one been discovered, all 32,815 cans would have had to be rejected, according to Canadian Food Inspection Agency rules.

But when inspectors learned the meat was donated, canned by volunteers and to be shipped mostly overseas, the inspectors volunteered to inspect each can themselves. That means only defective cans, rather than the entire lot, would be rejected. Inspection of one batch of 2,520 cans last month produced only four defective ones. The inspection process continues.
—*Canadian Mennonite*

As religious violence increases in India, seminary president welcomes persecution as faith challenge

ELKHART, Ind.—Despite growing violence against Christians, the students and faculty of Union Biblical Seminary in Pune, India, do not hide from persecution. Instead, the school's president expects the time of persecution to strengthen the church in India.

In a visit to the Mennonite Board of Missions offices in Elkhart on Sept. 1, Leaderwell Pohsngap said the persecution signals a need to "change the way we witness, educate and live, so that we can be even stronger in our evangelism."

Although the seminary has not been a direct target of violence, he said the campus community is beginning to consider ways to respond in word, deed and prayer. "This is part of being alive to the issues, of being alive to the need to respond," Pohsngap said. "We also need to remind people that [persecution] is part of the heritage of Christians."

Incidents of violence against religious minorities in India, especially Christians, have recently increased. A small group of radical Hindu fundamentalists is believed to be responsible for the violence, which has escalated since the Hindu nationalist BJP party came to power in 1998. Christians make up about 2 percent of India's population.

Pohsngap said the school strives to remain connected to the changing world, even in the face of persecution. "The world is changing very fast," he said. "We need to be able to adjust ourselves to the changes. We need to be faithful to the Bible and relevant to the world around us. We are a school that is very, very intentional about being biblical. Everything centers on the Bible. The emphasis on lifestyle is a result of the biblical emphasis."

The student body of 244 is divided into 46 ministry teams that each weekend work with congregations, nongovernmental organizations or slum ministries.

"All students are required to participate," Pohsngap said. "It trains our students for hands-on ministry." That shifts the focus from hiding from persecution to strengthening ministry and evangelism skills, he said.

After the second year of studies, all students in the four-year master of divinity program participate in a nine-month internship, after which they return to campus for a final year of studies. "When they come in to do their last year, you can see that they see [ministry] totally differently," Pohsngap said. "We used to do the internship at the end of the program, but we had no way to evaluate what they had learned, and the students had no way to discuss what they had experienced.

"We want to be a spiritual center that produces pastors, evangelists and missionaries. We're not interested in producing scholars. We want to train people for hands-on ministry."

Pohsngap dreams in the future of developing the school's mission department into a training center that offers degrees in mission up to the doctoral level.

Union Biblical Seminary was incorporated in 1953 as an interdenominational school supported by North American mission agencies, including the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. Other supporting denominations include the Mennonite Brethren, Free Methodists and Christian and Missionary Alliance.

Pohsngap, a 1979 graduate of Union Biblical Seminary, is in his fourth year as president of the school. In addition to campus-based programs of study, the school offers theological education by extension to 500 students in English and Marathi, a local language.—*Bethany Swope of GCMC and MBM news services*

We also need to remind people that [persecution] is part of the heritage of Christians.

— *Leaderwell Pohsngap*

EMM photo by Shane Knudsen

Hands up

Left to right: Mariangela Eboli, Ruth Hornberger, Cheryl Martin and Brian Martin, staff members of Eastern Mennonite Missions' Baltimore Discipleship Center, lead worship during the Aug. 27 commissioning service for 60 participants in EMM's Youth Evangelism Service program. Some 1,300 people attended the service, held at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite High School. The YES volunteers will serve for six to 12 months in Europe, Asia and North America. New YES assignment locations this year are in India, Indonesia, the Philippines and Alexandria, Va. Other workers will serve in Atlanta, Central Asia, Germany, Honduras, Italy, Kenya, Mexico, Nicaragua and Reading, Pa.

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Bethel president will not accept another term

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Douglas Penner, president of Bethel College since 1995, has announced he will not accept another term as president of the North Newton, Kan., school. He will complete his second three-year appointment on June 30, 2001. The college's board of directors will act on the request when it meets Oct. 5-6.

"The decision was not an easy one," Penner told faculty and staff on Sept. 19. "Timing seems right at this point, given the college's key transition points in fund raising and facility development and progress in student enrollment. These last five years have been challenging but cherished ones."

During his tenure, Bethel began a $19-million capital campaign, completed construction of a new residence hall, renovated several campus buildings and initiated plans for a new science facility.

Former Hesston College president dies at age 97

GOSHEN, Ind.—Tilman Smith, president of Hesston (Kan.) College from 1959 to 1968, died Aug. 31 at the age of 97. He had been living at Greencroft retirement center in Goshen, Ind.

Smith arrived at Hesston in 1959 after serving as a public school teacher and administrator in Illinois. During his tenure, he helped stabilize the college's financial situation and presided over the transition of Hesston Academy to a public school.

Smith was a graduate of Hesston Academy and Goshen College. Memorial services were held at College Mennonite Church, Goshen. Smith is survived by five children. His wife, Louella, died in 1998.

72 teams play in softball tournament for MCC

FORT WAYNE, Ind.—Mennonite congregations from Fredericksburg, Ohio, and Goshen, Ind., took home championship trophies from the 2000 Indiana Mennonite Softball Tournament, held Labor Day weekend to benefit Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

Mennonite Christian Assembly, Fredericksburg, won the men's division, defeating Goshen's Yellow Creek Mennonite Church A in the championship game. Yellow Creek claimed the women's title, defeating Mennonite Christian Assembly to conclude the tournament undefeated.

Mount Joy Mennonite Church, Goshen, finished third in the women's division, while Central Mennonite Church, Fort Wayne, was fourth. In the men's division, Pleasant View Mennonite Church, Millersburg, Ohio, and Bethany Mennonite Church III, Hartville, Ohio, were third and fourth respectively.

The annual tournament drew 58 men's and 14 women's teams from six states. Since it began in 1978, the tournament has raised more than $40,000 for MCC.

Late theologian, Europe focus of symposium

LIESTAL, Switzerland—Nearly 100 people gathered at the Bienenberg Bible College and Seminary Sept. 8-10 to examine the work of the late theologian John Howard Yoder and its implications for Mennonite churches in Europe today.

Speakers for the symposium, called "The Wisdom of the Cross," included Mark Thiessen Nation, Mennonite Board of Missions worker in London, where he is director of the London (England)Mennonite Centre, and Neal Blough, a worker with MBM and the Commission on Overseas Mission who teaches at a seminary in Vaux, France. Particular attention was given to Yoder's peace theology, work in Anabaptist history and concept of the church.

Pete Byler

Peace and quiet

Goshen (Ind.) College senior Deborah Scott spends time alone with her books on a beach on North Manitou Island, Mich. Scott and seven other students spent Aug. 20-27, the week before the start of fall semester, on the Lake Michigan island for "Creative Writing and the Natural World," led by Goshen English professor Todd Davis and biology professor Mary Linton. The group, which camped on the island, learned field biology, read and discussed books by authors ranging from Annie Dillard to Wendell Berry, kept journals and wrote poetry.

Workers

Baumgartner, Bev, Newton, Kan., has begun as chaplain at Showalter Villa, Hesston, Kan.

Baumgartner, Elizabeth, Versailles, Mo., has begun a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment as a resource program assistant in St. Paul, Minn.

Braun, Margaret, Fresno, Calif., has begun a two-year MVS assignment teaching English in San Antonio.

Carney, Charles, Topeka, Kan., has begun a two-year MVS assignment at the Peace Center of South Central Kansas in Wichita.

Corbin, Jonathan, has begun as associate pastor for youth at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Coulter, Erica, Wichita, Kan., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a medical assistant in Boulder, Colo.

Cowells, Nathalie, Goshen, Ind., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as assistant to the director and personal aide at Joseph's House in Washington.

Darling, Timothy E., was ordained July 9 as pastor of Norma (N.J.) Mennonite Church.

Engle, Donna, Topeka, Kan., has begun a two-year MVS assignment with Interfaith Ministries in Wichita, Kan.

Ewert, Linda, was licensed for Christian ministry Sept. 17 at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita, Kan.

Funk-Froese, Christie, Edmonton, has begun a one-year MVS assignment at Welcome Home Community in Edmonton.

Geissinger, Rachel, Excelsior, Mich., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as volunteer coordinator and membership assistant for Washington Trails Association, Seattle.

Gingerich, Charlotte, Iowa City, Iowa, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as librarian and teacher's aide at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Goering, Shana, Moundridge, Kan., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a literacy worker in Chicago.

Gordon, Winston E., was licensed June 25 as assistant pastor for Gospel Light Community Church, Bridgeport, Conn.

Graber, Jesse, Newton, Kan., has begun a two-year MVS assignment as program assistant at Patchwork Central, Evansville, Ind.

Guete, Marco and Sandra, Hesston, Kan., have completed four years of service in Colombia with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. Marco will be based in Dallas as associate conference minister for Western District Conference.

Hess, Dale and Ursula, have completed 12 years of service in Niger and Mali with Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM).

Howell, Cecily, Vermilion, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as program support staff and education assistant at Emerald City Outreach Ministry in Seattle.

Kaufman, Douglas D.H., has concluded his term as associate pastor at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa. He is now pastor at Benton Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

King, Omer E., hasconcluded his term as pastor at Sandy Hill Mennonite Church, Coatesville, Pa.

Koepplin, Clarence, Dillon, Mont., has begun a two-year MVS assignment teaching English for Lutheran Social Services in Sioux Falls, S.D.

Kurtz, Christopher, Keyser, W.Va., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as coordinator for the Arts in Prison program in Kansas City, Kan.

Loeppky, Diedrich Robert, Winkler, Man., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a carpenter assistant for Community Home Repair Projects of Arizona in Tucson.

Loeppky, Linda, Winkler Man., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as an organizer and program developer for the Zuni Peace Center in Tucson, Ariz.

Mack, John, Huron, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as site supervisor for Sports 4 Kids in San Francisco.

Martin, Irvin L., was ordained June 25 as bishop/overseer of the Bowmansville-Reading District of Lancaster Conference.

Martin, Robert K., was licensed July 21 as associate pastor for Calvary Mennonite Fellowship, Morris Run, Pa.

Mauer, David, Gondenbrett, Germany, has begun a two-year MVS assignment as a supervisor for Habitat for Humanity in Fresno, Calif.

McMahon, December, Lebanon, Tenn., has begun a two-year MVS assignment as a health educator in Brownsville, Texas.

Nebel, Erin, Wayland, Iowa, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as program assistant for Boys and Girls Club of Fresno, Calif.

Oyer, Rachael, Dalton, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as children's program coordinator for Atwood Homeless Shelter, Boulder, Colo.

Petty, Annette, Liberty, Mo., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a computer literacy teacher in Chicago.

Pruett, Julie, Centerburg, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as program assistant at Boys and Girls Club of Fresno, Calif.

Rice, Pauline, Nazareth, Pa., completed a one-year EMM term teaching English in China.

Sandoval, Nicolas, has concluded his term as pastor of First Mennonite Church, Brooklyn, N.Y.

Schildt, Brent, Marietta, Pa., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a carpenter assistant with Habitat for Humanity in Americus, Ga.

Siegrist, Marc, Bird-in-Hand, Pa., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a medical assistant at the Spanish Catholic Center in Washington.

Snyder, James R., was ordained July 16 as lead pastor of Maranatha Christian Fellowship, Nazareth, Pa.

Stucky, Nathan T., was licensed June 4 as youth pastor of Holly Grove Mennonite Church, Westover, Md.

Suter, Kari, Bluffton, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a teacher's aide for Associated Youth Services in Kansas City, Kan.

Thomsen, June, has begun as pastor of Grace Community Church, Chicago.

Treptow, Joachim, Lauenberg, Germany, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a construction coordinator for Habitat for Humanity in Richmond, Va.

Vasquez, Pedro Jr., was licensed June 25 as assistant pastor for Gospel Light Community Church, Bridgeport, Conn.

Walden, Carmel, Gypsum, Colo., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a teacher at Hopi Mission School, Kykotsmovi, Ariz.

Weyel, Markus, Gusternhain, Germany, has begun a 14-month MVS assignment at the Topeka (Kan.) Center for Peace and Justice.

Worth, Dave, Kitchener, Ont., has begun as director of Constituency Ministries for Mennonite Central Committee.

Yoder, Annette, Wellman, Iowa, has begun a one-year MVS assignment with Mother to Mother in Topeka, Kan.

Zimmerman, Craig M., was licensed July 21 as associate pastor for Mountain View Fellowship, Trout Run, Pa.

Zook, Kathleen, Iowa City, Iowa, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as citizenship program coordinator for the Spanish Catholic Center in Washington.

Births

Bergen, Kate Isabelle, Aug. 21, to Angie (Hiebner) and Brian Bergen, Henderson, Neb.

Bethune, Cameron Lynn, Aug. 30, to Craig and Danielle (Friesen) Bethune, Henderson, Neb.

Bogoya, Sofia Michelle, Aug. 18, to Lisa (Enns) and Raul Bogoya, South Bend, Ind.

Buller, Sawyer David, Aug. 18, to Lonnie and Maris (Sawyer) Buller, Ashland, Neb.

Burress, Kayla Ann, Aug. 27, to Ken and Sheri (Burkholder) Burress, Middletown, Ohio.

Coblentz, Uriah Scott, Aug. 25, to Lee Ann (Eicholtz) and Randy Coblentz, Toano, Va.

Derksen, Grace Brunner, Aug. 21, to Julie (Brunner) and Paul Derksen, Sellersville, Pa.

Ebersole, Seth Jordan, Sept. 2, to Janet (Martin) and Tom Ebersole, Fredericksburg, Pa.

Eichelberger, Dora Suzanne, Aug. 31, to Chelle (Long) and James Eichelberger, Fisher, Ill.

Fisher, Natalie Nicole, Aug. 1, to Anita (Gerber) and Jeffrey Fisher, Orrville, Ohio.

Friesen, Brandon Scott, Sept. 1, to Dustin and Jody (Betka) Friesen, Henderson, Neb.

Horst, Joel Nicholas, Aug. 31, to Alicia (Godfrey) and Jeffrey Horst, Lancaster, Pa.

Keener, Jackson Roth, Sept. 2, to Anne (Roth) and Steven Keener, Denver.

Landes, Corina Elyse Pelkey, Sept. 5, to Craig and Tana Pelkey Landes, Perkasie, Pa.

Lehman, Maria Ruth, Sept. 4, to Beth and Phil Lehman, Harrisonburg, Va.

Liddle, Quintin Stuart, Aug. 29, to Jonathan Liddle and Shari Mann, Flagstaff, Ariz.

Longacher, Isaac Wade, Aug. 17, to Lisa (Hostetler) and Mark Longacher, Castle Rock, Colo.

Miller, Nicholas Benjamin, Aug. 26, to Benjamin and Jill (Maitland) Miller, Boswell, Pa.

Myers, Zachary Stephen Lowell, Sept. 1, to Shawn and Stacy (Fluck) Myers, Sellersville, Pa.

Nauman, Brenden Jeryl, Aug. 28, to Angie (Sensenig) and Jeryl Nauman, Newmanstown, Pa.

Parks, Janna Rae, Aug. 30, to Karen Parks, Denver.

Reimer-Berg, Jonathan Aaron, Sept. 1, to Don and Jennifer Reimer-Berg, Salem, Ore.

Rittenhouse, Sarah Grace, Aug. 27, to Ronda (Schlabach) and Steve Rittenhouse, Harrisonburg, Va.

Stauffer, Benjamin Walter, Aug. 16, to Chad and Judy Stauffer, Lancaster, Pa.

Yoder, Lukasz Daniel, Aug. 29, to Douglas and Roza Yoder, Los Angeles.

Zook, Patrick David, Aug. 25, to Jeremiah and Melanie Zook, Dalton, Ohio.

Marriages

Cassel/Purcell: Mike Cassel, Dublin, Ont., and Natashia Purcell, Dublin, Aug. 5 at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, Ont.

Dougherty/Weber: Tania Dougherty, Kitchener, Ont., and John-Michael Weber, Kitchener, July 22.

Dutkiewicz/Willems: Rob Dutkiewicz, Dowagiac, Mich., and Kate Willems, South Bend, Ind., July 22 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend.

Elliott/Zehr: John Elliott, London, Ont., and Colleen Zehr, London, Aug. 12 at Riverdale Mennonite Church, Millbank, Ont.

Helmuth/Loker: Annette Helmuth, Harrisonburg, Va., and Trey Loker, Harrisonburg, Aug. 5 at Keezletown, Va.

Howland/Thoman: Ivy Howland, Jewel, Kan., and Anthony Thoman, West Liberty, Ohio, Aug. 5 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, West Liberty.

King/Martin: Jessica King, Pittsburgh, and Chad Martin, Pittsburgh, July 29 at Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Mount Pleasant, Pa.

Miller/Newcomer: LaVon Miller, Shipshewana, Ind., and Gretchen Newcomer, Shipshewana, Sept. 2 at Shipshewana.

Deaths

Bridge, Junius, 78, Lyndhurst, Va., died Aug. 15 of cancer. Spouse: Irene Batman Bridge. Parents: Junius and Lonie Lowery Bridge (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Melissa Stipp; one grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 19 at Mountain View Mennonite Church, Lyndhurst.

Burkholder, Marjorie Heatwole, 92, Harrisonburg, Va., died Aug. 31. Spouse: John Burkholder (deceased). Parents: William and Katie Brunk Heatwole (deceased). Survivors: daughter Nancy Lee; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Harrisonburg.

Detwiler, Elizabeth Anne Johnston, 51, Bluffton, Ohio, died Sept. 2. Spouse: Tom Detwiler. Parents: Ernest (deceased) and Kathleen Hamilton Johnston. Other survivors: children Kimberly Coleman, James, Amy, Ellie, Amanda; four grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Enns, Homer, 68, Hillsboro, Kan., died July 31 of heart failure. Spouse: Louetta Adams Enns. Parents: Jacob and Sarah Klassen Enns (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, Richard, Christine Lynn; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 5 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Foth, Sarah, 97, Moundridge, Kan., died Aug. 25. Survivors: daughter Edna Anderson; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 29 at West Zion Mennonite Church, Moundridge.

Friesen, John, 92, Henderson, Neb., died Sept. 5. Spouse: Geneva Friesen. Parents: Klass and Susana Klippenstein Friesen (deceased). Other survivors: children Velda Decker, Marilyn Bartel, Quinton, Norris; nine grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Geiser, Andres, 12, Kidron, Ohio, died Sept. 2 in a plane accident. Parents: Roland and Karen Geiser. Funeral: Sept. 7 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Gratz, Delbert, 80, Bluffton, Ohio, died Aug. 24. Spouse: Thelma Dailey Gratz. Parents: Harvey and Fannie Lauby Gratz (deceased). Other survivors: children Del, Donna Huff, Conrad, Carolyn Franks; five grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 28 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Hartzler, Martin, 79, Mill Creek, Pa., died Aug. 24. Spouse: Sadie Kauffman Hartzler. Parents: Urie and Mary King Hartzler (deceased). Other survivor: foster son Ronald Ritz. Burial: Aug. 28 at Allensville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Isaak, Helen Hunsinger, 97, Aberdeen, Idaho, died Aug. 29. Spouse: Abraham Isaak (deceased). Parents: Samuel and Anna Hege Hunsinger (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 1 at First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen.

Keegel, Daryl, 40, Kidron, Ohio, died Sept. 2 in a plane accident. Spouse: Lisa Keegel. Parents: Eugene and Ruth Cady Keegel. Other survivors: children Amanda, Amy, Michael. Funeral: Sept. 5 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Keegel, Jonathan, 12, Kidron, Ohio, died Sept. 2 in a plane accident. Parents: Daryl (deceased) and Lisa Keegel. Funeral: Sept. 5 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Kerr, Maxine Swatsworth Snyder, 75, Columbiana, Ohio, died Aug. 15 of congestive heart failure. Survivors: children Linda Howdershelt, Joyce Ziegler, William, Larry; nine grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 19 at North Lima (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Kolb, Gerald, 38, Souderton, Pa., died Aug. 11 of injuries in an auto accident. Spouse: Sharyl Young Kolb. Parents: Irvin (deceased) and Gladys Souder Kolb. Other survivor: daughter Emily. Funeral: Aug. 16 at Towamencin Mennonite Church, Kulpsville, Pa.

Lehman, Edna Cable, 85, Davidsville, Pa., died Aug. 27. Spouse: Elvin Lehman (deceased). Parents: Amos and Lydia Cable (deceased). Survivors: children Paul, Robert, Allan; 10 grandchildren; 12 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 30 at Thomas Mennonite Church, Hollsopple, Pa.

Payne, Lela Mary Cowles, 95, Pulaski, Iowa, died Sept. 2. Spouse: Cleo Payne (deceased). Parents: D. C. and Emma Cowles (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, Darrel, Donna Augspurger, Dianne Knapp; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 5 at Pulaski Mennonite Church.

Penner, Orlando, 82, Hillsboro, Kan., died July 21 of heart failure. Spouse: Ruth Hiebert Penner. Parents: A. E. and Maria Funk Penner (deceased). Other survivors: children Kathy Decker, Leroy, Don, Stan, Jann Hershberger, Brad, Doug; 25 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: July 24 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Hillsboro.

Ruth, Norman, 86, Sellersville, Pa., died Aug. 30 of heart failure. Spouse: Mildred Moyer Ruth. Parents: Israel and Bertha Snyder Ruth (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Janice Gross; one grandchild; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 2 at Rockhill Mennonite Church, Sellersville.

Schmucker, Allen, 68, Toledo, Ohio, died Aug. 21 of cancer. Spouse: Alice Schmucker. Parents: Harvey and Nola Schmucker (deceased). Other survivors: children Tim, Doug, Judy Christian; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 25 at Toledo Mennonite Church.

Schwager, Willard, 92, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 2. Spouse: Katie Schwager (deceased). Survivors: children Margaret Delp, Frances Knudsen, June; 12 grandchildren; 19 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 7 at Souderton Mennonite Church.

Sommer, Norman, 71, Apple Creek, Ohio, died Aug. 26. Spouse: Erma Lou Sommer. Parents: Christ and Ida Lehman Sommer (deceased). Other survivors: children Ron, Connie Davis; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 29 at Kidron (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Troyer, Roger, 54, Harrisonburg, Va., died Aug. 31. Spouse: Jeanne Troyer. Parents: Cora (deceased) and Jonas Troyer. Other survivors: children Sarah, Emily, David, Jared. Funeral: Sept. 2 at Harrisonburg Mennonite Church.

Vandersall, Lloyd, 75, Orrville, Ohio, died Sept. 1. Spouse: Ruth Blumberg Vandersall. Parents: Herbert and Neva Goodin Vandersall (deceased). Other survivors: children Barbara, Raymond. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Martins Mennonite Church, Orrville.

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classifieds

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** seeks ***maintenance technician***: full-time, salaried or voluntary service with benefits, including health; lodging available on grounds. Staff invest personal skills to host God's ministry in a natural setting. Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, 1-800-839-1021 for application; or resume to Rt. 5 Box 145, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666.

- **Out-Spokin' fans:** Author of Christian Herald's *Pilgrim on a Bicycle* (about Out-Spokin's 1980 across-America bike hike) has a new electronic book, ***Cycling to the Source*** ($6.50). Read first chapter free! <www.hardshell.com> or email Barbara Mary Johnson <redbarn@calinet.com>.

- **Camp Luz** seeks ***program director***. Responsible for planning and implementing year-round retreats/events and summer camps. Also assists in other areas of the Christ-centered ministry.

  Contact Herb Lantz, 152 Kidron Rd., Orrville, OH 44667; 330-683-1246; <camp.luz@juno.com>.

- **Amigo Centre**, a camp/retreat center ministry in southern Michigan, has the following staff needs:

  Food service manager starting as soon as possible. This person is responsible for menu planning, food ordering, staff scheduling, some cooking, etc. This is a full-time salaried position with benefits. Salary depends on experience. Housing may be available on grounds if needed.

  Dining hall hostess starting as soon as possible. This person would be responsible for setting up for guest groups, hosting the groups and cleaning up after the groups. This is a one-year VS position.

  Office manager beginning Oct. 1. Duties include bookkeeping, database management, registrations, mailings and general office responsibilities. This is a full-time salaried position. Salary is dependent on experience.

  If interested in any of the above positions, contact Dana Sommers at 616-651-2811; <Dana@Amigocentre.org>, or write Amigo Centre, 26455 Banker Rd., Sturgis, MI 49091.

- **First Mennonite Church** of Fort Wayne, Ind., a diverse urban congregation, seeks a full-time ***pastor*** who will join us in our newfound vision, which incorporates a lay ministry team. We seek one whose gifts include preaching, administration and intergenerational people skills, and experience in cross-cultural settings.

  Contact Lamar Yoder, 219-456-1750; or <ldyoder@aol.com>.

- **Doylestown Mennonite Church** in Bucks County, Pa. (30 miles north of Philadelphia), seeks a full-time ***pastor*** to begin Jan. 1, 2001. The 225-year-old suburban congregation has a current attendance of 150. The pastor will provide direction and vision with a strong leadership team. A commitment to church growth and evangelism is desired.

  Please contact or send resume to Jackie Swartley, 225 Schwenkmill Road, Perkasie, PA 18944; 215-257-1899; <JBS@netcarrier.com>.

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Send or fax resume to:

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- **First Mennonite Church** of Richmond, Va., seeks a full-time ***pastor***. We are a multiethnic/racial metropolitan congregation that desires seminary-trained candidates committed to Anabaptist beliefs. Reply to Bill Ellis, PO Box 1463, Richmond, VA 23218; <wbellis@juno.com>.

- **Rosslyn Academy**, a Christian international day school in Nairobi, Kenya, is accepting ***teaching applications for the 2001-02 school year***. Rosslyn is a joint effort of the Mennonite, Southern Baptist and Assemblies of God missions in Eastern Africa, yet the school is nondenominational in faith and practice. Rosslyn serves over 400 students in grades K-12, and it is fully accredited with MSA and ACSI.

  Email Jim Leaman, Superintendent, <JimL@Rosslyn.iconnect.co.ke> or airmail to P.O. Box 14146, Nairobi, Kenya.

- **Washington D.C.-area Mennonite Voluntary Service** seeks ***coordinator*** for local program. Duties: recruitment and placement of volunteers, supervision of their community living experience, liaison with local and national leadership. Skills in interpersonal relationships, communication, leadership and administration needed. Knowledge of Mennonites or Anabaptism, D.C. area, very helpful as are group living and cross-cultural experience. Must have commitment to live simply and support work with poor.

  Contact Jenny Dillon, <jdindc@aol.com>, 202-667-4277, for job description and details.

- **Eastern Mennonite Seminary** announces a faculty opening in ***theology***. Employment will begin August 2001. Doctorate in the field required. Preparation and experience in another field or fields of theological education desirable. Significant ministry experience expected. Applicants expected to affirm Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective. Women and people of color are encouraged to apply.

  Send letter of application and resume by Nov. 1, 2000, to Ervin R. Stutzman, Eastern Mennonite Seminary, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has two openings for single people for ***one-year voluntary service assignments*** (begin dates immed. and Nov. 1). For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Lancaster Mennonite School** has three ***short-term teaching positions*** available during the 2000-2001 school year. A science teacher is needed Oct. 21-Jan. 12, and a business teacher and a science teacher are needed from Jan. 16-June 1. If you would like information on any of these positions, please call 717-299-0436, ext. 302.

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by Rich Preheim

Covering the globe

Those attuned to the intricacies of spreading the good news say the state of the world is pretty good in 2000. And not just because we survived Y2K. The real reason for such a positive report is the remarkable advances made in global evangelism, says *Mission Frontiers,* which produces the numbers to back up that claim:

- By the end of 2000, an estimated 80 percent of the world will have heard the gospel message.
- By the end of 2000, eight out of every 10 people will have access to the entire Bible in their own language. And nine out of 10 will have access to the New Testament. Eighteen languages are being translated per year, compared to three languages in 1900.
- In less than 10 years, the number of languages in which evangelistic broadcasting is done has increased from 170 to 249.
- The *Jesus* film has been seen by more than 3.3 billion people in 217 countries, resulting in 108 million known decisions for Christ.

"Although some may dispute some of the details, the overall trend is indisputable," says *Mission Frontiers.* "Biblical faith is growing and spreading to the ends of the earth as never before in history."

Nevertheless, there is still work to do. While Christianity is the largest religious group in the world, only 33 percent of the world's 6 billion people are Christian, with an annual growth rate of 1.45 percent per year. Islam is growing at a rate of of 2.15 percent per year, Sikhs at 1.9 percent and Hindus at 1.84 percent. There remains 1,117 distinct ethnolinguistic people groups of more than 10,000—6.3 percent of the world population—with less than 100 believers each. There are 539 groups totaling 81 million people without an on-site church-planting team, including 265 groups, or 45 billion people, that haven't been targeted for evangelism.

Across the great divide

It has been more than a century since blood has been shed in the infamous Appalachian feud between the Hatfields and the McCoys. But this past summer, both clans brought a new dimension—a religious one—to the conclusion of their hostilities.

At a Hatfield-McCoy "Reunion of the Millennium," a unity worship service was held, led by Terry Hatfield, pastor of Panora (Iowa) Church of the Brethren, and Bo McCoy, a Pentecostal minister from Georgia, according to the Church of the Brethren *Messenger.* Standing on a bridge over the Tug River, the border between West Virginia and Kentucky and geographic divide between the two families in the late 19th century, Hatfield and McCoy anointed each other to symbolize forgiveness and healing.

The anointing, a Church of the Brethren ordinance, "will hopefully bring the light of the Holy Spirit into what was a time of darkness for the families involved and this region of Appalachia," Hatfield said.

Watching and praying

In many U.S. "community watch" groups, residents report suspicious activity to the police. But a program in Nottingham, England, turns to a different authority.

In Nottingham's Prayerwatch, police officers and youth service workers give specific prayer requests, without mentioning names, to local congregations, who then respond to the requests during their regular worship services or in members' personal prayers. As a result, crimes such as petty theft, vandalism and harassment by gangs have decreased by 10 percent, related *Sojourners.*

But prayer alone isn't the only reason for the decrease in crime. "You show as best you can that prayer has an effect," says John Robinson, a city council official and Christian. "But certainly Prayerwatch has also made churches more hands-on within the community."

Look homeward, angels

Not that there is anything terribly surprising here, but a 10-year study of ministry students at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, found that the call to pursue a church-related vocation starts at home. Forty-three percent of those students surveyed said their decisions to go into some aspect of Christian ministry was influenced by their private Bible study and prayer, reported *Family Ministry.* Thirty-eight percent of the students cited opportunities for lay ministry experience in their home congregations, while 33 percent named the influence of Christian parents and a Christian home.

Going to extremes

This also shouldn't be surprising: In this age of extreme sports, Bethany Bible College in Sussex, N.B., has started a new program called Extreme Discipleship to prepare students for lay ministry, according to *The Wesleyan Advocate.*

Tidbits

- The Oberammergau Passion Play has a cast of 2,200, involving about half the people of the village of Oberammergau, Germany.—*Christianity Today*
- There are 33,800 denominations in the Christian world.—*The Observer*
- Pop singer and actress Madonna has 71 times more web sites devoted to her than does Mother Teresa.—*AFA Journal*
- A city ordinance in Idanha, Ore., prohibits eating unshelled peanuts in church on Sunday.—*Joyful Noiseletter*
- There are 11 congregations for every 10,000 people in the United States.—*Evangelical Visitor*

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Gordon Houser

Family discipleship

My family is the arena where I've learned most about following Jesus, about suffering love, about depending on God.

In some circles the nuclear family (a foreign concept in biblical times) is romanticized, held up as a place of bliss, the goal of every good Christian. Since Jesus said, "Whoever comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and even life itself, cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26), I cannot place the nuclear family on a high pedestal. Yet that is where I have learned the most about being a disciple of Jesus.

A disciple is a learner. Being a husband and a father has taught me that loving others requires attention, work and self-sacrifice.

Attention: This is basic. The others you've committed yourself to love won't let you skate through life on some cloud. You need to listen to them, and if you don't, they may yell at you. Listen, look them in the eyes, pay attention.

Work: Often this means actual, physical work, whether it's the job you do to earn money so that your family has enough to eat, or the many chores that need doing around the house. There always seems to be something needed to keep the family alive if not thriving. And I've learned that mowing the lawn or washing the car may be more appreciated than a bouquet of flowers.

Following Jesus means learning to give up the illusion of having control over events or others. My family has certainly helped me with this valuable lesson in discipleship.

Self-sacrifice: This does not usually feel very noble. It tends to happen when my love for my wife or children blinds me to the fact that I'm sacrificing anything at all. In my heart I know that I'd happily die for them. But a more relevant question is, Will I admit I'm wrong and ask forgiveness? That often seems harder than an imagined martyrdom.

Following Jesus means learning to give up the illusion of having control over events or others. My family has certainly helped me with this valuable lesson in discipleship.

We parents may be tempted to control the behavior of our children, and we may succeed often enough to keep trying. But soon we have to realize that the task of raising children involves helping them become more independent so that they may learn to be interdependent. Good community relations—in families, churches, nations—require members to exercise interdependence. We all need to learn to be responsible while recognizing our need of others to some degree. We all need to learn to get along.

That's what families are about. And that's what is often most difficult. We work at it, we stumble, we mess up, we ask forgiveness. Then we keep going, keep learning.

That's what churches are about as well. There's a reason the early church chose familial language to describe the relationship of members. We most show we are followers of Jesus by our love for one another (John 13:35).

No matter what our situation—married, never married, divorced, widowed, with or without children—we are called to live as a family, the family of God.

My experience as a husband and father simply makes that more concrete for me. I realize that living as a family is mostly mundane, an everyday reality that doesn't usually fit the category of perfection. Nevertheless it keeps me humble, keeps me depending on God.

On Aug. 19 my son, 17, was baptized at our congregation's annual retreat. I felt happy, proud, thankful. It was clear to me that this was an outpouring of God's grace. Ethan had made his decision for himself. Certainly his parents and members of his congregation had influenced him, but it came down to his own relationship with God.

Parenting can feel like a crapshoot, a roll of the dice. You put in the work, you weep and laugh. You hope that the times you've screwed up don't outweigh your good intentions. But in the end, your children have to make their own decisions, as do we all.

Church is similar. We try to be faithful in loving one another, but in the end we must leave the outcome in God's hands. I wouldn't want to leave it anywhere else.—*gh*

the Mennonite

October 3, 2000

how shall we eat?

page 4

6 Not by giants or by heroes
10 Mennonite Church USA takes shape
12 For MDS, fences make good neighbors
20 The true church

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Voice of experience

Homer Witmer talks about capital punishment and asks if there is an alternative solution for crime (Readers Say, Sept. 5). He asks a valid question. Witmer states, "For victims of a merciless killer, justice is complete when the killer has experienced what he/she has done to their loved one." I wonder if Witmer has lost a loved one to murder.

My youngest son was murdered in 1989 by an offender with a history of being in trouble with the law, starting in grade school. He had just been released from prison and was on probation when he shot my son. When the offender was 2, his father deserted the family. He grew up with sibling rivalry and a mother who refused to discipline him. When he got into trouble at school, she blamed the school for picking on her son. This offender never received the help, support, guidance or love he needed. This is not an excuse for what he did.

At first I wanted to hurt the offender like he had hurt my son and our family. It took time for me to realize my own anger would further destroy me. I had to deal with my anger before I could go on with my life. The offender who shot my son is serving a life sentence, which means he will be eligible for parole after 15 years. My fear is what he will do to someone else if he gets out. I'm glad he wasn't sentenced to death. Now I can go on with my life instead of dealing with appeals and all the other legal options available to the offender.

The death of the offender doesn't solve the grief or pain of the loss. When I've listened to family members of a murder victim after the offender has been put to death, they express disappointment over how they feel. A second death hasn't fixed anything. In polls, people support the death penalty if there are no other choices. When the option of life imprisonment with no possibility of parole is added, support for the death penalty drops.

Prevention is the answer. Everyone needs love and acceptance. There are many programs working to help struggling families. Habitat for Humanity has many success stories. When families have a decent home they function better. Offender Victim Ministries works with offenders and victims to help offenders understand the results of their actions and gives victims opportunity to express their feelings of hurt, anger and betrayal to the offender. Repeated crimes by these offenders is low. OVM in Newton, Kan., is also beginning to work with anger management. Many communities are working to educate and give support to young parents on how to be a parent.

These are just a few positive alternatives to solving and preventing crime.—*Wilma Loganbill, Newton, Kan.*

Child's play

Re Albert Eberly's letter questioning the appropriateness of the cover of the Aug. 15 issue (Readers Say, Sept. 12): My first response to him would be, "You've got to be kidding!" I wish he would explain to me how innocent children showing obvious delight in the beauty of a God-given summer day would somehow be fighting purity of thought and holy living in the Mennonite church. I can only conclude that perhaps Eberly is the one with a problem in this area.—*Janet L. Wright, Lancaster, Pa.*

Please, let's not look at a picture of children at play and see something offensive or (dare I say it?) sexual. Instead, let's look at children and see fun, fellowship and sharing. Let's see them as innocents who have not yet been taught about things that are shameful. Children accept everyone and enjoy the life God gave them. Let us be more like them. The way we look at the world is what our children will emulate. Let us learn from them, as they learn from us.—*Corinne Hanna Diller, Houston*

Looking for loopholes

Harold N. Miller argues that allowing congregations to endorse divorce and remarriage while prohibiting them from endorsing same-sex marriages is consistent because Scripture is ambiguous in its teachings on divorce and remarriage but clear on homosexuality (Readers Say, Sept. 5). I disagree.

The Lord himself, in a culture that permitted divorce and remarriage almost as freely as ours does, explicitly called divorce and remarriage "adultery." The reason he gave is that in marriage, the two people become one in a way that no human being, not even the partners, can separate (Matthew 19:3-9). Miller notes correctly that Jesus allowed an exception for divorce in the case of marital unfaithfulness (Matthew 19:9). Since that is the only possible exception in the New Testament, why does Miller not insist on the discipline of all congregations with members whose divorces were not due to the prior infidelity of their spouses?

Miller finally offers the desperate and incoherent distinction that same-sex couples con-

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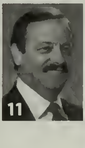

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readers say

tinue to live in sin throughout their relationship—even though same-sex sex is forgivable—while forgiveness somehow allows divorced and remarried people to have sex without it continuing to be adultery. Miller's argument necessarily implies that he thinks that forgiveness for adultery frees a person from previous marriage vows. Nowhere in the New Testament can we find that step from forgiveness to endorsement of the sin, which in practice leads to the exact opposite of Jesus' teachings on the matter. Surely adultery is a forgivable sin, but marriage remains an unbreakable bond.

Instead of Miller's approach of looking for loopholes to permit sins we like, a better course would be to be strict in defining all sin by biblical definitions (which will constantly reveal each of us to be a sinner) while we, at the same time, accept each other as God accepts us: as sinners embraced in the crucified Jesus Christ.—*John Zimmerman, Rocky Ford, Colo.*

Mind your Ps and Rs

Thanks for printing Paul V. Springer's letter (Readers Say, Sept. 5). God is speaking through Springer, for he, as the prophets 2,600 years ago, is calling for a return to the three Rs: repentance, revival and renewal. I add a fourth R, and that is a Christ relationship to draw us together rather than rely on doctrine or programs to unite us. May we have the humility, courage and common sense to prioritize just that and trust God to call off sure destruction and judgment. May those who are called to leadership display that and call others to the four Rs with the same determination we have been called to the three Ps: programs, projects and plans.—*Percy Gerig, Lebanon, Ore.*

Cover photo
by Religious News Service

How shall we eat?

How to create a healthy, balanced lifestyle

by Graham Kerr

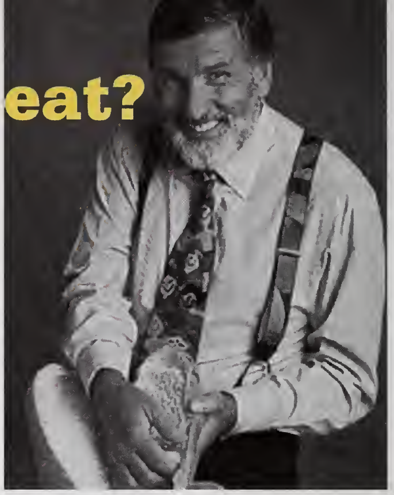
My journey to healthy living began in 1973, after I read a challenging book called *How the Other Half Die*. Before long, I had plunged deep into dismal statistics that indicated one child under 5 dies every 0.75 seconds and that adults in North America were dying every 43 seconds. The essential difference was that children died from starvation-related disease, while we were dying from over- and unwise consumption. A few months later I made my whole life commitment to be "more like Jesus today than I was yesterday." In doing so I joined Treena, my wife, in her splendid conversion to Christianity.

From 1978 to 1987, we devoted our lives to a missionary endeavor with Youth With a Mission. Treena taught from her life experience, meshed with Scripture, about inner attitudes, while I searched for ways to redirect unwise consumption away from self-destruction and help those who suffered lack. In short, I was involved in creative connection between the affluent and destitute. I still am.

During our time as mission workers, I came to understand that change is not easy. It can be threatening and hard to maintain, often resulting in guilt and loss of self-worth when the resolve weakens and the goals are not reached. Some statistics show that, over a five-year period, as many as 90 percent of those who set out to change a food-related habit fail. The human cost in despair is enormous, and the economic cost runs up to billions per year in repeated and often vain attempts to live within reason.

Over a five-year period, as many as 90 percent of those who set out to change a food-related habit fail. The human cost in despair is enormous, and the economic cost runs up to billions per year in repeated and often vain attempts to live within reason.

How then should we eat? The answer comes through Scripture. "The kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17). We are, of course, commanded to "seek first the kingdom of God" and not be preoccupied with what we should eat and drink because God knows that we have need of those things and it is "[God's] good pleasure to give [us] the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).



Cooking as an act of kindness: Graham Kerr

www.grahamkerr.com

Since 1987, I have committed my life to a spiritual search for a creative solution. Change cannot be ordered or achieved by a system. It is a matter of sequence, something that must begin in the heart.

Of profound importance to me is the word "care." I see cooking as an act of kindness when it is caring wrapped in pleasure. This, above all, must be present as a motive before any known method is discussed. I'm overly fond of metaphors, acronyms and acrostics. To me, C.A.R.E. stands for the following:

Concern—to have one's mind filled with …

Altruism—selfless devotion to the well-being of another person;

Restoration—to return something to its original design;

Enthusiasm—from the Greek "en theus," in God.

So we can read the word care as, "To have one's mind filled with a selfless devotion for the well-being of another person so that they may be restored to their original design in God."

In essence, therefore, we can re-examine the often dull, repetitive, unrewarding task of cooking and see it become an act of kindness in which we can see someone we love returned to their original design in God. I'm convinced that cooking is a spiritual activity.

I'm equally certain that a stand-alone food change is not the answer. Rather it is what I call a connected lifestyle decision. To use another metaphor, think of a chair. A chair has six elements: four legs, a seat and the chair back. The four legs represent food, exercise, reflection and friendship. The seat stands for one's comfort level based on realistic achievement goals. The chair back is our sense of uprightness or moral awareness based on Scripture.

The first leg is food. The more varied the foods in your pantry, the more creative you can be. The more creative you are, the more fun it is. The more fun cooking is, the more individually creative you become. The more individually creative you are, the more you will own what you cook. The more you own your food, the more rewarded and appreciated you become. Individual creativity is the key to lasting, enjoyable lifestyle change because you own it—it's yours.

The second leg is exercise. Be realistic when starting a new exercise plan. A realistic start-up plan may be to plan for 20 to 30 minutes of energetic cardiovascular exercise and include six to eight resistance exercises. The goal of any exercise session should be to burn as many calories as possible, so make sure at least half your exercise is spent doing aerobic exercises. A general guideline is to make sure you do something aerobic and/or energetic for 20 to 30 minutes most days of the week.

The third leg is relaxation. Just as we stretch and relax our muscles in order to build tone, we need to stretch and relax our emotions to build stability. Unstable emotions affect our physical health and contribute to many addictions, eating disorders and disease. I've found three kinds of relaxation: active—an emotionally rewarding activity; passive—controlled inactivity in comfortable surroundings; and remedial—reflective time built into periods of maximum stress.

The fourth leg is friends. Strangely this leg is seldom considered essential, yet it can be the most rewarding. One of the best places to be with friends is the dining table. Serving food at one's table provides an oasis in the burning desert of modern superactivity. It is a place of relaxation, restoration, conversation and relationships. Ask yourself how many times in the last six months you have invited friends over for a meal.

Each of the legs must be the same size, or else the chair will tip. And it's held together by the seat, which is you. The back is your values—spiritual and moral. Together, they all create a healthy, balanced lifestyle. By working slowly at the various elements, we can make lifestyle changes that help us be healthier in all aspects of our lives—spiritual, emotional and physical.

For more information about the MEDA Convention, contact 800-665-7026 or visit <www.meda.org>. For more about Graham Kerr, visit <www.grahamkerr.com>.

Graham Kerr is an award-winning author, television personality (the "Galloping Gourmet"), culinary consultant and former missionary with Youth With A Mission. Since 1987 he has committed his life to a spiritual search for a creative solution to the problem of self-destructive eating habits. Kerr is not only looking for ways to influence the way we eat but also the way we think about eating. He will be a keynote speaker at the Nov. 2-5 Mennonite Economic Development Associates Convention in Vancouver.

Leadership #8

by Rich Foss

I sing the engine that misses,
the frayed electrical cord,
and Three Mile Island.
While others chant success
I sing failure.
I sing the broken water main,
missing pages from the hymn book
and Chernobyl.
I sing for all the men who cannot fix an alternator
or design a better pacemaker.
I sing the burned-out fuse,
the broken toaster
and the o-rings on the Challenger.
I sing for all the women who cannot make rhubarb sauce
or sew a bridesmaid dress.
I sing missed doctors appointments,
cavities,
and couples who fall asleep.
I sing kids who stutter,
missing library books
and the flu.
I sing boring preachers,
pealing church paint,
and a rise in the cost of funeral dinners.
I sing potholes,
overheated radiators
and scuffed shoes.
I sing for all those who are cut from the team,
the girl who blows an open lay-up,
and those who come in second.
I sing poor report cards,
parents who will not listen,
and kids who drop out of school.
I sing Dutch elm disease,
frost-bitten tomatoes
and dandelions on the lawn.
I sing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s dream,
Cheyenne peace chiefs,
and Mary, Mary and Salome who were not believed on Easter.

Rich Foss lives in Tiskilwa, Ill.

difficult texts of the Bible

When people began to multiply on the face of the ground, and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that they were fair; and they took wives for themselves of all that they chose. Then the Lord said, "My spirit shall not abide in mortals forever, for they are flesh; their days shall be one hundred twenty years." The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went in to the daughters of humans, who bore children to them. These were the heroes that were of old, warriors of renown.—Genesis 6:1-4 NRSV

Not by giants or by heroes

Third in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by Ryan Ahlgrim

The early chapters of Genesis pose a host of interpretive problems for the believer, but no passage has proved to be more bizarre than Genesis 6:1-4. It has defied satisfying explanation. Who are "the sons of God"? Angels? But aren't angels sexless and unable to marry (Matthew 22:30)? And are we actually to believe that angels married human women and produced children who became giants (Nephilim) and ancient heroes? This sounds more like Greek mythology than biblical theology. And why does this incident provoke God to limit human longevity to 120 years (while the angels apparently get off scot-free)? These are only a few of the troubling conundrums posed by this passage. Scholars who analyze each word are puzzled by several more. Is there a solution to these problems, or is Genesis 6:1-4 a thorn in the biblical flesh that will never be removed?

Genesis 6:1-4 is actually a sharp critique of ancient mythology, which idealizes superhuman heroes. The author of Genesis knows that humanity's dilemma is too deep for such a shallow solution.

I doubt some of the thorny questions evoked by this passage will ever be answered, but if we look at the bigger picture of the human dilemma and Israel's response to that dilemma, this passage comes into focus. Genesis 6:1-4 sounds like Greek mythology but also unlike Greek mythology.

We are familiar with stories of ancient gods and goddesses who fall in love with particular mortals and through them produce children. The offspring of these divine-human unions become the famous heroes of Greek mythology. Figures such as Achilles and Hercules are endowed with abilities far beyond those of ordinary mortals. They slay monsters and defeat incomparable enemies, and through these great feats they save kingdoms and inaugurate a Golden Age. Nearly every culture has stories of such a golden age, when humans were superhuman, and their exploits were worthy of giants.

Human pride and self-destruction: The ancient Israelites certainly heard these stories from their pagan neighbors. But for the Israelites, the age of heroes and giants and semidivine beings was not a golden age; it was just part of the same sad story of human pride and self-destruction. And so, in Genesis 6:1-4, we hear a story that sounds like Greek mythology but at the same time opposes the assumption of Greek mythology.

The Genesis writer tells us: Yes, there was a time when mortals and immortals mixed, producing heroes and giants. But it wasn't a golden age. It wasn't a solution to the human dilemma of sin and self-centeredness. On the contrary, it simply continued these destructive tendencies and choices.

A pessimistic view of the age of heroes is confirmed by the next verse (6:5) which says, "The Lord saw that the wickedness of humankind was great in the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of their hearts was only evil continually." This is then followed by the story of the Flood, God's judgment on a

The essential problem with humanity is its desire to be like God. Rather than flourishing in a relationship of humble trust and obedience, we want to control our own lives and act as our own god.

humanity that cannot save itself, not even with the help of semidivine heroes and giants.

Genesis 6:1-4 is actually a sharp critique of ancient mythology, which idealizes superhuman heroes. The author of Genesis knows that humanity's dilemma is too deep for such a shallow solution. In fact, one way to look at Genesis 3 and 4 is as an account of the human dilemma and chapters 6–11 as a symbolic account of three failed solutions for the human dilemma.

Chapters 3 and 4 seem fairly clear in their spiritual diagnosis: The essential problem with humanity is its desire to be like God. Rather than flourishing in a relationship of humble trust and obedience, we want to control our own lives and act as our own god. The consequences are oppressive relationships, hardships, murder and vengeance. The question posed by the human dilemma is, How can we be freed from a life of self-imposed, self-centered misery?

Superhuman heroes: The first possible solution is to save humanity with superhuman heroes. Perhaps giants and strong men can free us from our futility. But giants aren't always on the right side (Goliath), and strong men still have weak wills (Samson). Genesis 6:3,5 punctures any hope that superhumans will save humanity. The essential human problem of wanting to be our own god has not been solved (if anything, superhumans make it worse).

The second possible solution is to save humanity through picking out the most moral human being and starting all over again. This is the approach pursued in the Flood story (Genesis 6–9). But this strategy is no more successful than intermarrying angels and mortals. Noah is a good man, but he is still a drunken sinner overtaken by self-centeredness, and the humanity that follows him is no better than the humanity that came before him. Genesis 8:21 sadly concludes, "For the inclination of the human heart is evil from youth."

The third possible solution is to save humanity by banding together and building a civilization that reaches heaven (Genesis 11:1-9). Humans will simply civilize themselves out of barbarity. But this program fails as well: Human communication breaks down, and the grand project must be abandoned. Today we continue to pursue these three strategies despite millennia of failure.

Instead of an ark peopled by the morally best, we try to create utopian communities (or churches) composed of the morally best. But even the best are sinners, and the result is ultimately no better than that from which we were running away. Instead of building a tower that reaches heaven, we put our trust in science, technology and human progress. But despite the benefits of science, it does not save us from our human divisiveness; and so we destroy the environment, plunge ourselves into world wars and build nuclear weapons that may annihilate the human race. And instead of angels having offspring with human women, we are now contemplating breeding a better human being with the help of genetic engineering, perhaps even eliminating aging and death. Such a vision is a nightmare, and we can only hope God will be faithful in maintaining a 120-year limit. But Genesis does not despair, for the true solution to the human dilemma is presented in chapter 12: the calling of Abraham. Abraham is not a superhuman hero, neither is he a moral paragon or a tower-building technocrat. He is a flawed human being, no different from the rest of us, who has just one thing going for him: he trusts in God, letting God be God. Through him will come a people who will also live by trusting in God, and through that people will come One who does not seek equality with God but empties himself, taking the form of a servant, obeying God all the way to the cross.

Abraham is not a superhuman hero, neither is he a moral paragon or a tower-building technocrat. He is a flawed human being, no different from the rest of us, who has just one thing going for him: he trusts in God, letting God be God.

Aligning ourselves with such trust, such servanthood, such obedience is the only way to break the power of self-centeredness that drives the human dilemma.

Ryan Ahlgrim is pastor of First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

Use me Lord, but not there

Reflections from the book of Jonah

by Darrel M. Hostetter

Jonah desired to be faithful to God, but when God called him to go to Nineveh, he headed in the opposite direction. He apparently got on a boat and, according to some scholars, headed toward Spain. Who would want to spend weeks crossing a desert to go to preach to your enemy? "Those Ninevites are too sinful, so just destroy them, Lord. Besides, what will my king say if I go to Nineveh? Perhaps my own king may arrest me for treason."

The story of Jonah comes much closer home to us when we realize that Nineveh is located in what today is northern Iraq. Would any of us recognize God speaking to us about going to the people of Iraq?

Jonah probably was a disciple of Elisha and may have been prophesying the victories in Israel's golden age of Jeroboam II. Jonah felt he had many good reasons for not wanting to go and preach to the city of Nineveh. First of all, Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, which was a feared and despised enemy. In fact, it is this nation that eventually destroyed Jonah's home land of Israel. Who would want to go and preach in a city of one's dreaded foes? Perhaps Jonah rationalized like we often do: "Why would God ask me to go somewhere else when I have such a successful ministry here?"

It is easy to imagine that Jonah may have had a few drinks so he could forget what God had asked of him. After he boarded the boat, he fell fast asleep. It was not long before he was rudely awakened. The seamen were afraid they were going to lose their lives in the violent storm that had arisen while Jonah slept. They pleaded with Jonah to call on his God.

Now this was a situation Jonah had not anticipated. Here were heathen sailors who were asking him to get right with his God. He soon realized that he had already caused much loss for these seamen because they had thrown much of their cargo overboard. Jonah felt guilty and wanted to die. The seamen seemed to fear God more than he did.

In the belly of the fish: Finally when all other efforts were fruitless and the storm only increased in its fury, they threw Jonah overboard as he had instructed them to do. The raging sea immediately became calm and the sailors worshiped God. Meanwhile a great fish swallowed Jonah. Despite the fact that Jonah had wished for the end of his life, God did not let him off easy. After three days in the belly of the fish, Jonah was ready to obey God's call.

Jonah went to Nineveh and preached the message God gave him: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned." Jonah felt a tinge of arrogance as he preached to the Ninevites because he was preaching judgment, not mercy. That's what our enemies deserve. "In fact, maybe my king will praise me for my message of judgment against Nineveh. Then he'll know that I'm not a traitor." But Jonah was not ready for what happened next. The Ninevites repented in sackcloth and fasting.

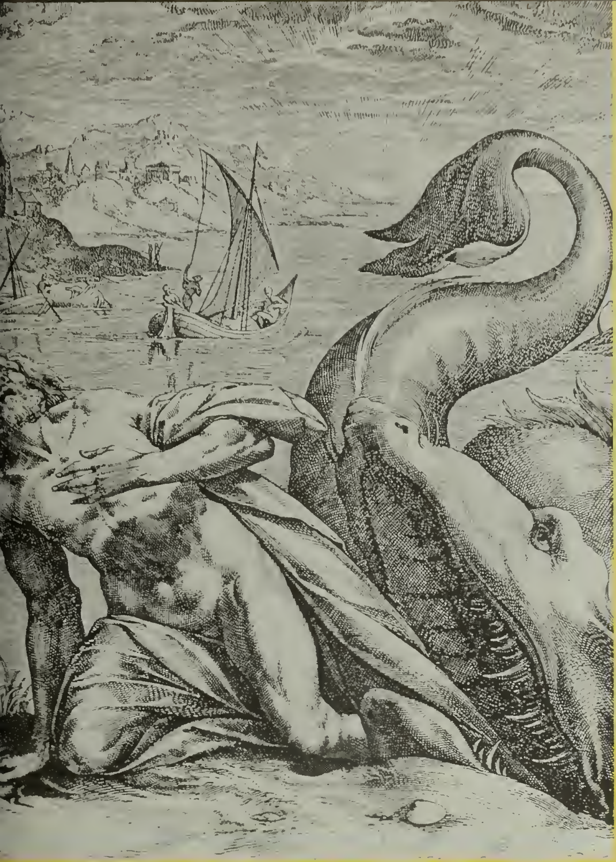
"Use me, Lord, but not that way. God, you can use me to preach judgment on my enemies, but surely not mercy. You are embarrassing me. My reputation is at stake here. I told the people that in 40 days their city will be destroyed, and now you are having compassion on them and extending mercy instead of judgment. God, do you love me? Maybe I should have never come, because you aren't doing what you promised. God, if you expect me to obey you, then do what I prophesied to them."

Jonah sulked in self-pity. He could not stand the fact that his enemies were finding peace with God. Where would that put him? Is it possible to be at peace with God and have as your enemies those who have peace with the same God? Again Jonah sought to forget his dilemma. He said, "O Lord, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live" (4:3). He wanted to escape his own responsibility of serving God in God's way.

"Use me, Lord, but not now." Jonah had preached as God had instructed him. Now when God was extending mercy on a city of over 120,000 people, Jonah resisted speaking for God. He went out of the city and sat down in some shade the Lord provided. I suspect Jonah felt like he deserved this time of rest and refreshing shade, a little air-conditioning on a blistering day. He may have sat down and said, "Yes, I deserve this after many days of ministry in the hot sun. Thanks, Lord." But the next day the shade was gone because God sent a worm to kill it. We see that Jonah's heart was more intent on finding comfort for himself than on discovering what was on God's heart. Jonah pitied the plant that died more than the Ninevites who were lost in their sin. For the third time, Jonah wanted to die because instead of providing Jonah with his wants and pleasures, God was more interested in ministering to the needs of Nineveh.

Salvation of our enemies: Do we not identify with Jonah in that our comforts, which we call our rights, are more worth dying for than the salvation of others, particularly the salvation of

Do we not identify with Jonah in that our comforts, which we call our rights, are more worth dying for than the salvation of others, particularly the salvation of our enemies?



Perhaps in much the same way as Jonah, we betray God's love for everyone because we refuse to believe that our enemy is capable of any redeeming qualities.

our enemies? As the United States seems locked in hostility with modern-day Iraq, can we see patterns of Jonah in ourselves? How many of us have been praying for Iraq and its people? How many of us really care about the spiritual and physical needs of the Iraqi people? Do we even care that more than 1 million innocent people have died since the Persian Gulf War because of the embargo that has been instituted against this country and its people? Do we feel the grief of an Iraqi mother seeing her child die for lack of medications because of the sanctions?

Do we find ourselves sympathizing more with our government policies because they support our lifestyle in our robust economy? How many of us really care about both our brothers and sisters in Christ in Iraq as well as those who do not know Christ? Do we also struggle with Jonah's temptation to rely more on the tokens of God's love than on God? Do we really want to know how God feels about Saddam Hussein and the Iraqi people? Maybe we don't even want to ask the question.

Jonah found it easier to condemn his enemies than to pray for them. Do we rejoice at our enemy's downfall or do we find ways to bless our foe? Perhaps in much the same way as Jonah, we betray God's love for everyone because we refuse to believe that our enemy is capable of any redeeming qualities.

When we say, "Use me, Lord, but … ," let's remember that to say this is contrary to faith and allegiance to the God of gods. How can we call him Lord, meaning absolutely the One in charge, and then tell him how to do his work?

Imagine the prospects of our praying, "Use me, Lord," without our adding the qualifying "but." Imagine the effect of Christians in North America reaching out in massive gifts of generosity and love to the Iraqi people. Might this be one positive result of seeing our own bias and prejudice, which have identified us with Jonah?

Darrel M. Hostetter is pastor at Mount Vernon Mennonite Church, Grottoes, Va. This article is adapted from a sermon he preached there.

Mennonite Church USA takes shape

Executive Board OKs first proposals for Nashville

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—The future of Mennonite Church USA is now. Its Executive Board has approved the first transformation proposals, showing what parts of the emerging denomination may look like, pending delegate action next summer's convention in Nashville.

The board took its actions Sept. 22-23, meeting at the convention site, the Opryland Hotel and Convention Center. The board's work will continue in January, when all proposals are scheduled to be finalized. Transformation Team director Jim Schrag told the board, "You are the alpha and the omega of a very crucial time when things come together."

Among those things were the membership guidelines, suggesting resolution to the transformation process' most contentious and defining issue. The board unanimously approved sending the guidelines to the delegates at Nashville. That action came just a week after the Constituency Leaders Council gave its consent to the guidelines (see Sept. 26 issue). Executive Board members hailed the CLC's support as a breakthrough for the sake of the future of the church. "CLC leaders ... have found a new meeting of their minds," said Jim Harder.

Moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman, who chairs the CLC, said, "I heard a commitment and a growing trust from people to work together."

The board, however, did make one significant change to the guidelines, allowing provisional-member conferences to keep voting privileges and to make members of such conferences eligible for denominational offices. The guidelines grant provisional membership, originally defined as nonvoting, for up to five years to those MC area conferences which may not be sure about joining Mennonite Church USA. The change in the guidelines emerged from discussions in the board's executive committee, which thought it important to maintain as many connections as possible. "How else can they stay in close touch with the church we hope they join?" said Harder, an executive committee member.

While the guidelines will come separately to the delegates for action, the other proposals accepted by the board will probably be included in the bylaws, articles of incorporation and plan of merger, which will require delegate approval.

The first proposal approved by the Executive Board focused on denominational schools, which was ironic, noted Ed Diller, chair of the Education Integration Committee. "Many said education would be the downfall of the integration process," he said.

The reason for that skepticism was the differing relationships General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church colleges have with their denominations. The three MC colleges are directly governed by the church, while the two GC colleges are independent institutions affiliated with the church. Rather than force all colleges to have the same relationship with Mennonite Church USA, the Education Integration Committee proposed that each college be allowed to negotiate its own connections with the denomination's new education agency.

The proposal covers all Mennonite Church USA-related schools, from elementary to secondary, and other academic initiatives. Funding the new agency would come equally from the schools and from the church, an idea some thought unrealistic in its expectations of church support. While the board approved the proposal, it and all others may need to be revisited as the pieces of the new church fall into place.

The board also accepted two other proposals: one designating Mennonite Mutual Aid as the Mennonite Church USA program board responsible for stewardship initiatives, the other outlining a denominational communications office. The latter decision, however, is subject to later developments, such as staffing decisions and discussion of the roles of denominational periodicals, including *The Mennonite* and a possible every-home flagship periodical.

Generating the most discussion and concern was the initial proposal for funding Mennonite Church USA, based on firstfruits giving, defined in the proposal as "offering to God the first and best of life in worship and using the rest in generous ways that honor God." That is in contrast to conventional budgets that set expected levels of contributions. "It can't be a firstfruits system if you dictate what the amount is," Integration Funding Committee member Mark Vincent told the board.

Under the committee's proposal, house-

Seminary has new Guatemala campus

After two years of work to build a new home, SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist seminary, is ready to dedicate the facilities.

SEMILLA moved onto its new Guatemala City campus in August. Dedication and graduation ceremonies will be held Oct. 15. Eight to 10 students are expected to receive degrees or diplomas.

The seminary programs had previously been housed at several locations. The new campus includes classrooms, library, offices, bookstore, guest house and the language institute of Central American Study and Service, or CASAS.

On Oct. 16-20, Hugo Zorilla will give the Hans Denck Lectureship, speaking on "Exegesis and Mission in the Postmodern Age." Zorilla is a Colombia native now teaching at Mennonite Brethren-affiliated Fresno (Calif.) Pacific University.

SEMILLA's history goes back to 1974, when Central American Mennonite leaders started holding annual conferences.

holds would give their "firstfruits" to their congregations, which would in turn give their firstfruits to their area conferences and Mennonite Church USA program boards, which would then give their firstfruits to the Executive Board, which would give its firstfruits to Mennonite World Conference.

The board affirmed the principle of the proposal but requested more specifics about its application and feasibility since it is a radical departure from past practices. The initial proposal did not quantify firstfruits or include any financial projections. "I'm one of those dollars-and-cents people," said Duane Oswald, Executive Board secretary. "I think we're very naive thinking we can change behavior churchwide."

Integration Funding Committee chair Yvonne Keeler said the board's request was expected and that the committee has already started work on it. "Until you get that commitment to that philosophy, you can't go on to the next step," she said.

The board meeting also included a tour of the Opryland Hotel facilities, which will house all convention activities. In each of the four main meeting halls, the group offered prayers for the events scheduled to be held there. The hotel has more than 2,800 rooms, of which 2,500 will be reserved for the convention.
—Rich Preheim

General secretary to step down early

ELKHART, Ind.—George Stoltzfus believes Mennonite Church USA needs to clearly have one top executive. So at the end of the year—sooner than expected—he will leave his post as the emerging denomination's general secretary, paving the way for Jim Schrag to assume full responsibilities.

Stoltzfus has been Mennonite Church USA general secretary since July 1999, the same time Schrag became director of the Transformation Team, overseeing the creation of Mennonite Church USA out of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. Schrag was named in June as the new denomination's executive director and expected to take office immediately following next summer's convention in Nashville, Tenn. Instead, he will assume executive responsibilities on Jan. 1, 2001. Stoltzfus is based in the denominational office in Elkhart, Ind. Schrag will remain in the Newton, Kan., office.

As transformation intensifies leading to Nashville, Stoltzfus says it is important for Schrag to be able to more freely shape the agenda that he will have to carry out after the convention.

"There have been times of ambiguity which seemed more pronounced when Jim Schrag was named executive director-elect," says Stoltzfus, who had excluded his name from the list of possible candidates for executive director. "It seemed better for both Jim and myself to resolve that ambiguity by my stepping down at this time."

Schrag said he will miss Stoltzfus' "insights and companionship on this journey."

"I respect George's decision and the wisdom of it for himself, for me, for the board and the church," he says. "It's done with integrity and some measure of sacrifice."

Mennonite Church USA moderator Lee Snyder says Stoltzfus has modeled servant leadership as general secretary. "George's devotion to the work of the church, his commitment to transformation and his gift of encouragement have been enormous contributions to the denomination coming into being," she says.

Stoltzfus

Added moderator-elect Ervin Stutzman, "In the midst of a frenetic pace, George has maintained his ability to reflect and be silent and to take time to nurture his own soul."

Stoltzfus says his greatest satisfaction during his tenure has been recognizing his part in shifting the transformation agenda.

"We have gained in our understanding of the complexity of what we are doing, and we have come to realize that there is more at stake here than simply riveting together two church bodies," he says. "We are forming a church body that is different from both that preceded it, and the new church will be in a better position to respond to God's call for us."

Before assuming his Mennonite Church USA position, Stoltzfus had served as general secretary of the Mennonite Church from 1996 to 1999. A former physician, he had been a hospital administrator in Cumberland, Md., from 1988 to 1994, when he entered Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., graduating in 1996.

Iraq topic for one presidential guest

The meal was chervil frittata with tomato compote, chicken fennel sausage and Yukon gold potato hash. The setting was the White House, and the company included Bill Clinton.

But amid all the finery, Susan Mark Landis tried to give voice to the Iraqis suffering under United Nations sanctions.

Landis, minister of peace and justice for the Mennonite Church, was one of 140 people invited to Clinton's annual breakfast with religious leaders on Sept 14. It was at that same breakfast two years ago that the president asked for forgiveness for his relationship with Monica Lewinsky.

This time, however, the topic was different. Clinton spoke about debt relief for poor nations and health care. Landis did have opportunity to greet the president, at which time she voiced concern about the sanctions on Iraq. She reported Clinton was not receptive to her position.

For MDS, fences make good neighbors

Project under way to help Montana wildfire victims

AKRON, Pa.—After spending the summer fighting wildfires, Montana ranchers are now trying to contain and feed their cattle before the first snowfall. But in one region, they are getting neighborly assistance from Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS).

"The ranchers are just shaking their [heads]" says MDS field consultant Jim Shelly. "Their pastures are burnt. Their fences are gone."

MDS volunteers are helping replace more than 180 miles of fence that the flames reduced to charred posts and brittle wire. A project site has been opened in Townsend, in the region known as Maudlow—located between Helena and Bozeman in southeastern Montana. While no homes were damaged, the Maudlow fire consumed nearly 81,000 acres of private ranch land—the largest private land loss of all the state's fires.

The scorched wooden fence posts are being replaced with new steel posts that are more resistant to fire and easier to install. Because of the rugged terrain, an estimated 75 percent of the posts will need to be hand driven into the rocky soil.

"After driving in two or three posts, an older man will be pretty fatigued," says project director Martin Fast. "We have 180 miles of fence, and that is over 40,000 posts. Our biggest concern is finding enough young men to finish the job."

Young people are not the only ones who can help. Labor will also be needed to operate the power post drivers and string new wire. The old, brittle wire must then be rolled up and removed from the fields.

At least 8,000 fence posts have already been donated. But MDS is struggling to find more equipment. Most ranchers have the necessary tools for building fences but are not equipped to support large groups of volunteers. MDS is looking to purchase, rent or borrow equipment from other ranchers.

Building new fences is only half the challenge for ranchers. They are also worried about feeding their herds, which on average consist of 100 to 200 head of cattle. Even before the fire, Maudlow ranchers were concerned about insufficient stores of hay for the coming winter. The entire region has been under drought conditions for three years. Due to the fires, ranchers are digging into their winter supplies two and a half months earlier than last year. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that up to 6,000 additional tons of hay will be needed.

Fearing that cattle won't survive the winter, many ranchers plan to sell their calves early. But doing so before the animals reach full weight means losing as much as $50 per head. Meanwhile, some ranchers are bound by contracts preventing them from selling their cattle before they reach a certain weight. If enough hay is made available, ranchers may be able to keep their herds until the animals are large enough to sell.—*Ted Houser of MDS News Service*

> We have 180 miles of fence, and that is over 40,000 posts. Our biggest concern is finding enough young men to finish the job.
>
> —*Martin Fast*

Peru ministry goes to the dogs

With the assistance of the dog's owner, Peruvian Mennonite Sixto Miranda injects a German shepherd with rabies vaccine. When health officials cited the Quispicanchis district in southern Peru as having one of the world's highest levels of rabies infection, the two local Mennonite congregations volunteered to help combat the disease. The effort was organized with the help of local Eastern Mennonite Missions workers and the health commission of the national church, Iglesia Evangelica Menonita del Peru. "The whole campaign went miles to build trust between the congregations and the local government officials," says EMM team leader Steve Weaver. "It has given the Mennonite churches a good name and testimony in the community. . . . What we did in the name of Jesus has sparked interest in his life-giving power."

EMM photo by Tiffany Book

Discord gives way to 'melting of hearts and minds' as Indonesians repair breach in largest synod

BANDUNGAN, Indonesia—After years of discord, including outright schism since 1996, two factions of Indonesia's oldest and largest Mennonite synod have reunited.

The reconciliation occurred at an August meeting of representatives of the two groups of the Javanese Mennonite Church (GITJ). A GITJ general assembly will meet in November to elect a joint board and develop two-year plans and future vision.

During the August meeting's closing session, in which leaders from both sides shared how the separation had affected them personally, "participants witnessed a very unusual melting of hearts and minds," reports Lawrence Yoder, a missiologist from Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va.

Yoder has been helping heal the rift since 1998. He and his wife, Shirlee, served in Indonesia with Mennonite Central Committee from 1970 to 1979. Facilitating the reconciliation was a peacemaking team from Indonesia's Duta Wacana Christian University, led by MCC worker Duane Ruth-Heffelbower.

The split has its roots in administration of the church and its institutions, particularly a hospital, which has prompted litigation, fights for control of power and plenty of suspicions. Yoder says the last straw came when GITJ leaders failed to convene a regularly scheduled general assembly. Younger leaders grew impatient and called their own assembly, leading to the creation of a second delegate body and general board.

The Yoders, with support from MCC and Dutch Mennonites, led a 1998 retreat of leaders from both sides. The two groups later formed a joint team to work on a reunification process. Team members Pudjo Kartiko and Hendro Soeradi, each from rival factions, have participated in Eastern Mennonite University's Summer Peacebuilding Institute.

This past June, the Yoders invited the two boards to meet again, where participants began identifying needs and developing plans for reconciliation.

Indonesia became the first Mennonite overseas mission field in 1851, when Dutch Mennonites sent Pieter Jansz to the island of Java. Work there led to the creation of the GITJ in 1940, which today has more than 47,000 members. Indonesia is home to two other Mennonite synods, the GKMI and JKI, which are made up primarily of people of Chinese, rather than Javanese, descent.—*MCC News Service*

Corrections: An Eastern Mennonite University restorative justice program in Russia is funded by the Center for Legal and Judicial Reform, in addition to the U.S. Agency for International Development and Mennonite Central Committee, as reported in the Sept. 19 issue.

Susanna Meyer, a Goshen (Ind.) College junior from Scottdale, Pa., was the subject of a photo published in the Sept. 16 issue. She was misidentified in the caption.

New *Rejoice!* editor named

NEWTON, Kan.—Byron Rempel-Burkholder, editorial director of Faith & Life Press, has been named editor of *Rejoice!*, the quarterly devotional magazine published jointly by the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Mennonite Brethren (MB).

Rempel-Burkholder will begin Dec. 1, succeeding Philip Wiebe, who has resigned after six years as editor. Rempel-Burkholder will continue in his current Faith & Life position, devoting a fourth of his time to *Rejoice!*

He was born in Ethiopia, where his parents were MC missionaries, and later served with the MB mission board in Winnipeg and Congo. He has also served as a GC pastor and has been with Faith & Life Press since 1997.
—*GCMC News Service*

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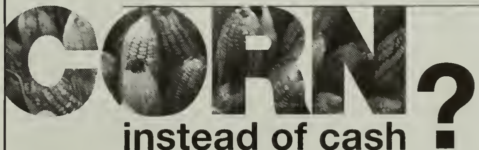

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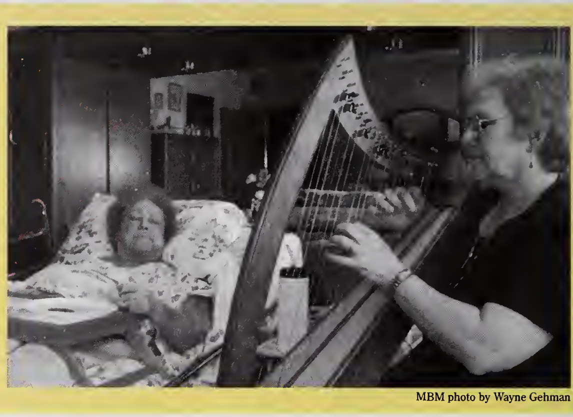
Angel music

Janice Graber, a Service Opportunities for Older People worker from Freeman, S.D., provides music for a hospice patient in Carlsbad, N.M. Graber volunteered to play the harp as part of her SOOP assignment. SOOP is a joint program of Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Association of Retired Persons and Mennonite Central Committee Canada.



MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Play allows Palestinians to speak, break silence

GAZA CITY, Gaza—Trent Wagler was aware of the plight of Palestinians in the Middle East. But he says he was not prepared for "how misunderstood and misrepresented" their story has been.

Wagler set out to change that. A 20-year-old theater student from Kansas, he recently spent a year in Gaza with Mennonite Central Committee's Serving and Learning Together program. As part of his work teaching English at a school, he led his students in drama exercises and journaling activities that he developed into a play called *Voices of Freedom.*

"Very simply, I have a land, and they took this land," says one of the young actors in *Voices of Freedom.* "I could not do anything to return to this land."

"Art is expressing yourself," Wagler says. "Particularly in a society where there has been so much tragedy and horror, people need a level of expression beyond daily conversation."

None of his students had previous acting experience, but they welcomed the outlet for their feelings. "We've held them in so long with no way to relieve our anger," says 16-year-old Razan Al-Agha. "Doing the play was such a relief for us. All the words were ours. We all felt the same: This is me—I'm speaking out!"

Wagler says developing the play was being faithful to Christ. "We have a responsibility as peacemakers to allow [the Palestinians'] story to be told truthfully," he says.—*Sonia Weaver for MCC News Service*

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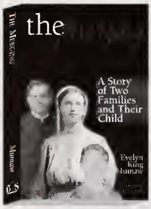

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Schools collaborate on peace center

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen (Ind.) College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) in Elkhart, Ind., have joined with a Michigan school to pull pacifism out of the books and onto the street.

The two Mennonite institutions and Andrews University, a Seventh-day Adventist school in Berrien Springs, Mich., will sponsor an ecumenical violence-prevention center combining peace research with initiatives aimed at reducing violence in Elkhart County. The project is funded primarily by a $247,000, three-year grant from the New York-based Teagle Foundation. Reaching Common Ground, an Elkhart County anti-violence group, is also providing some funding.

Mary Yoder Holsopple is the project's director. She and her family have served with Mennonite Central Committee and World Council of Churches in Uganda and Mozambique during periods of fighting. Yet, Holsopple says, she has seen more violence in peacetime North America—on TV and movie screens, in literature and in everday action—than in war-torn Africa.

"Our culture has become violent so subtly that we're not even aware of the violence around us," Holsopple says. "My desire to build this center comes out of an intense passion for wanting to prevent the kind of violence I've experienced."

The center's objectives include reducing violence in schools and neighborhoods around the county, creating and promoting a model to address the violence in U.S. culture, better integrating peace research with community involvement and providing practical experience in community violence prevention to college and post-graduate students. The grant also provides for a major symposium to explore nonviolence needs.

The center will be built through input from local governmental, law enforcement, judicial, social service, medical, educational and religious groups. Scholarships may be offered in the future to provide training for international work.

AMBS dean Loren Johns is excited about the center's potential to open new means of community involvement. "It represents a new, significant investment for AMBS in the local community," he says. "We have resources that can be shared, but we need structures to learn what needs the community has and how to match needs with resources."

AMBS, Goshen and Andrews share an emphasis on peace. Goshen offers a peace, justice and conflict resolution major, while AMBS offers a master of arts degree in peace studies. AMBS and Andrews, which provides master's degrees in social work, offer two dual-degree programs: peace studies-social work and divinity-social work.

"This partnership offers exciting opportunities combining the community-based efforts of our religious traditions to share the Christian gospel of peace," says Sharon Pittman, chair of Andrew's social work department. "The initiative also affords our students opportunities to learn and serve together."

Join us on the transformation journey…

We have been blessed with the opportunity to look anew at our vision, core values and mission. Like a church planting experience, it allows us to renew our commitment to God and each other.

—Ervin Stutzman, moderator-elect, Mennonite Church USA

The process of transformation is work—hard work. I have observed God's Spirit evidenced in that work—encouraging, reminding, lifting up and enfolding us as the church seeks to be faithful.

—Lee Snyder, moderator, Mennonite Church USA

Help God's healing and hope flow through us to the world. The new Mennonite Church USA is raising $800,000 to help fund integration. We invite your financial support on Sunday, October 29—Transformation Sunday: Envisioning Healing & Hope.

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Mennonite Church USA

by the way ...

In 1933, gangster John Dillinger robbed a Bluffton, Ohio, bank of which Mennonite historian C. Henry Smith was president. —*Dancing with the Kobzar* by Perry Bush

MCC honored for humanitarian efforts

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has joined the ranks of Andrei Sakharov, Mother Teresa and Jonas Salk as recipients of a Canadian award for international humanitarian contributions.

The St. Boniface General Hospital Research Foundation named MCC as the recipient of its 2000 International Award at a Sept. 20 news conference in Winnipeg. The award will be presented Nov. 16 in Winnipeg.

"The contributions MCC has made to the betterment of society on a global scale are absolutely second to none," foundation chair Bill Norrie said in making the announcement.

MCC executive director Ron Matthies said: "This award is a tribute to the strong sense of service among the thousands of volunteers who have worked with MCC over the past 80 years. It is also recognition of the wide scope of MCC's work, which is done in almost 60 countries around the world."

St. Boniface General Hospital was western Canada's first hospital, founded in 1871.—*MCC News Service*

European grants benefit Guatemalan work

SAN PEDRO CARCHA, Guatemala—Guatemala's K'ekchi' Mennonite Church and K'ekchi' Mennonite Foundation have provided 900 K'ekchi' families with dry latrines, thanks to grants from the European Union.

Since 1996, the European Union has been funding and working with the Guatemalan Ministry of Health to improve the health of indigenous Guatemalans. K'ekchi' infant and maternal mortality rates are among the highest in the country.

The European Union supplied the materials, payment of administrative costs and technical skills forthe project. The K'ekchi' communities contributed the labor for the construction of the latrines.—*MWC News Service*

EMM declares commitment to local ownership

SALUNGA, Pa.—As it explores participation in the mission structures of Mennonite Church USA, Eastern Mennonite Missions has reiterated its commitment to local oversight. EMM is the mission agency of Lancaster Conference.

"From the beginning of this process and with strong affirmation from Lancaster Conference leaders and districts, EMM has maintained a posture of continuing local ownership and governance of all EMM programs," says EMM president Richard Showalter. "This is coupled with our historic position of ... fraternal and cooperative relations with other mission-sending organizations."—*EMM News Service*

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Events

Indiana Mennonite Women's Missionary Rally, Oct. 12, Topeka (Ind.) Mennonite Church. Contact Gail A. Shetler, 219-534-5446.

Doylestown (Pa.) Mennonite Church 225th anniversary celebration, Oct. 22. Contact 215-345-6377; fax 215-345-9513; <doylestownmc@juno.com>.

Bethel Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn., mission celebration and homecoming, Nov. 4-5. Contact church, 507-427-3075.

St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship 25th anniversary celebration, Nov. 12. Contact Sheila Yoder-Baer, 636-584-0231; <yoderbaer@juno.com>.

Births

Baboolal, Evan Duval, Sept. 11, to Lisa (Weber) and Mark Baboolal, Bolton, Ont.

Barr, Marissa Joy, Sept. 15, to Crystal (Geissinger) and Robert Barr, Pennsburg, Pa.

Carr, Olyvia Mae, Aug. 31, to Deanne and Randy Carr, North Lima, Ohio.

Eshleman, Jeanessa Rose, Sept. 2, to Bryan and Sharon (Hoover) Eshleman, Salem, Ore.

Graber, Joshua Wyse, Aug. 13, to Deb (Klopfenstein) and Rick Graber, Stryker, Ohio.

Linklater, Kennedy Ruby Elaine, Sept. 8, to Jodi (Friesen) and Wade Linklater, Altona, Man.

Miller, Ariana Emelita, March 30, 1999, received for adoption Aug. 24, 2000, by Mark and Wendy (Wyse) Miller, Archbold, Ohio.

Mumbauer, Sara Elizabeth, Sept. 4, to Amy (Smith) and Steve Mumbauer, Waynesboro, Va.

Shantz, Ashley Danielle, Aug. 12, to Lori and Michael Shantz, Palmerston, Ont.

Shelley, Nicole Anne, Aug. 24, to James and Michelle Shelley, South Bend, Ind.

Shultz, Bethany Joye, July 11, to Regina (Moyer) and Ron Shultz, Powhatan, Va.

Szambecki, Katherine Olivia, Aug. 14, to Tom Szambecki and Martha Unruh, Newton, Kan.

Testa, Camryn Grace, Aug. 30, to Kim (Troyer) and Robert Testa, North Canton, Ohio.

Wagler, Kaleb David, Aug. 18, to Alisa (Kropf) and David Wagler, Tavistock, Ont.

Marriages

Austin/Heatwole: Alice Austin, Waynesboro, Va., and Galen Heatwole, Waynesboro, Sept. 2 at Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro.

Chupp/Grove: Barbara Chupp, Nappanee, Ind., and Timothy Grove, Howell, Mich., Aug. 19.

Cook/Vancura: Tamara Cook, Lincoln, Neb., and Brandon Vancura, Lincoln, Sept. 16 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson, Neb.

Diller/Kauffman: Mark Diller, Hesston, Kan., and Denise Kauffman, Scio, Ore., Sept. 16 at Lebanon (Ore.) Mennonite Church.

Friesen/Zook: Philip Friesen, Baltimore, and Brenda Zook, Baltimore, Sept. 2 at Shepherd's Spring Outdoor Ministries Center, Sharpsburg, Md.

Hamilton/Kandel: Kate Hamilton, Ashland, Ohio, and Corey Kandel, Dalton, Ohio, Aug. 11 at Ashland.

King/Swope: Marshall King, Elkhart, Ind., and Bethany Swope, Elkhart, Sept. 16 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Kyle/Miller: Merideth Kyle, Medina, Ohio, and Dale Miller, Medina, Aug. 12 at Bethel Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.

Deaths

Blosser, LaVerne, 79, Wayland, Iowa, died Aug. 30. Spouse: Anna Blosser. Parents: Abraham and Emma Gerig Blosser (deceased). Other survivors: children Laura Draper, Holly Blosser Yoder, Heather; five grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 3 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Bowen, Wilma, 63, Glendale, Ariz., died Sept. 4. Survivors: children Cindy Thies, Joyce Cooley; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 7 at First Mennonite Church, Phoenix.

Derstine, Kenneth, 71, Harleysville, Pa., died Sept. 2. Spouse: Ida Mae Ellis Derstine (deceased). Parent: Verna Moyer Groff Derstine. Other survivors: children Deborah Coll, Kenneth, Arden, Douglas, Thomas; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 6 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Derstine, Stayton, 80, Telford, Pa., died Sept. 5. Spouse: Edna Freed Derstine. Parents: Rowland and Sallie Derstine (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Nancy McCahan; two grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 11 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Earley Jr., Tom, 65, Accident, Md., died Aug. 12. Spouse: Cindy Earley. Other survivors: children Beth Fife, Bonnie Friend, Jeffrey, David Pitcock; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 15 at Oakland, Md.

Fisher, Lorene Wyse, 82, Brighton, Iowa, died Aug. 28. Spouse: Leonard Fisher. Parents: Sam and Emma Saltzman Wyse (deceased). Other survivors: children Krista Kolkman, Jane Hochstetler, Rita Burkholder, Gail, Van; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 1 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Hildebrand, Marie Unruh Schmidt, 98, Goessel, Kan., died Sept. 3. Spouse: (1st) Jacob Schmidt (deceased); (2nd) Jacob Hildebrand (deceased). Survivors: daughter Mildred Franzen; stepdaughters Averille Mace, Phyllis Smith; three grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; six stepgrandchildren; eight stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 7 at Tabor Mennonite Church, Newton, Kan.

Mast, Alvin, 88, Manheim, Pa., died Sept. 1. Spouse: Edna Mast Mast. Parents: Amos and Fanny Kennel Mast (deceased). Other survivors: children Vernon, Dale, Larry, Verda Geib, Anna Bishop; 11 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 4 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Atglen, Pa.

Miller, Mary, 99, Grantsville, Md., died Aug. 6. Spouse: Sherman Miller (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 9 at Grantsville.

Neff, Anna, 80, Lititz, Pa., died Aug. 19. Parents: Chester and Anna Neff (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 22 at Landis Homes Chapel, Lititz.

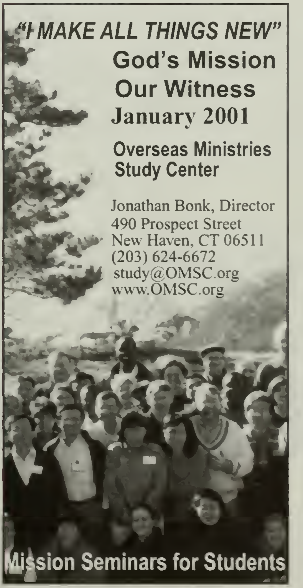
Ours, Harold Wenger, 79, Short Gap, W. Va., died Sept. 9. Spouse: Doris Livengood Ours. Parents: Russell and Marie Wenger Ours (deceased). Other survivors: children Glenna Kanner; one grandson. Funeral: Sept. 13 at Pinto (Md.) Mennonite Church.

Snyder, Allen, 85, Canby, Ore., died Sept. 8. Spouse: Iva Shrock Snyder (deceased). Parents: Christian and Nancy Schupe Snyder (deceased). Survivors: children Mim Swartz, Marylin Rush, Myrene Geiser, Kim Headings; 10 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Sept. 13 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Steury, Howard, 79, Chenoa, Ill., died Aug. 16 of pancreatic cancer. Spouse: Doris Moser Steury. Parents: Chris and Emma Habegger Steury (deceased). Other survivors: children Chuck, John, Chris Schimpke; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 19 at Meadows Mennonite Church, Chenoa.

Zacharias, Mary Maria Klassen, 88, Altona, Man., died Aug. 28. Spouse: William Zacharias. Parents: David and Anna Abrams Klassen (deceased). Other survivors: children Allister, Harvey, Grace Klippenstein, Calvin, Connie Kroeker; 12 grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 31 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Zimmerly, Orpha, 90, Smithville, Ohio, died July 29. Parents: John and Sarah Steiner Zimmerly (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 1 at Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.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- **Rocky Mountain Mennonite Relief Safe** for MCC, ***Oct. 20-21*** at the Arkansas Valley Fairgrounds in Rocky Ford, Colo. 1938 John Deere A tractor, Heywood Wakefield bedroom set, Singer treadle sewing machine, lanterns. <www.emclj.org/sale.htm>

- **St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship**, an urban congregation of approximately 80, is seeking a full-time ***pastor*** beginning fall 2001. Inquiries should be sent to Pastoral Search Committee, St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, 1443 Ross Ave., St. Louis, MO 63146; <yoderbaer@juno.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church** of Richmond, Va., seeks a full-time ***pastor***. We are a multiethnic/racial metropolitan congregation that desires seminary-trained candidates committed to Anabaptist beliefs. Reply to Bill Ellis, PO Box 1463, Richmond, VA 23218; <wbellis@juno.com>.

- **International Guest House**, Washington, D.C., a mission project of Allegheny Mennonite Conference, has two openings for single people for ***one-year voluntary service assignments*** (begin dates immed. and Nov. 1). For more information, contact IGH, 1441 Kennedy St. NW, Washington, DC 20011; 202-726-5808; fax 202-882-2228; email <igh-dc@juno.com>.

- **Belleville Mennonite School**, a private, Christian school located in central Pennsylvania with a preK-12 program, seeks ***administrator***. Qualifications: master's degree and/or experience in administration. Position available June 1, 2001.

  Contact Theil Kauffman by Nov. 30 at 131 French's Lane, McVeytown, PA 17051; 717-248-5733 (O); 717-899-6930 (H); <talc@acsworld.net>.

- **Doylestown Mennonite Church**, 590 N. Broad St., Doylestown, PA 18901, will be celebrating its ***225th anniversary*** Sunday, Oct. 22, 2000. The theme is "Celebrating God's Leading." We are looking forward to former pastors and members in attendance.

  For more information, call 215-345-6377; fax 215-345-9513; <doylestownmc@juno.com>.

- **First Mennonite Church** of Fort Wayne, Ind., a diverse urban congregation, seeks a full-time ***pastor*** who will join us in our newfound vision, which incorporates a lay ministry team. We seek one whose gifts include preaching, administration and intergenerational people skills, and experience in cross-cultural settings.

  Contact Lamar Yoder, 219-456-1750; or <ldyoder@aol.com>.

- **Western Mennonite School**, as part of an expanding and growing program, seeks a ***facilities manager***. Full-time position; management and supervisory experience necessary to lead a team that maintains and cares for facilities, plant and grounds. The campus has 7 buildings and is located on 40 acres just outside of Salem, Ore., in the beautiful Willamette Valley.

  For more information, contact Jerry Stutzman, Director of Finance, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000; <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

- **Menno House**, a live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2001. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Forest Hills Mennonite Church** seeks ***youth and young adult pastor:*** spiritually mature person with a passion for spiritual nurture of MYF and young adults. Work as part of a pastoral team and with member volunteers (good interpersonal skills needed). Training and/or experience required.

  Written inquiries and resumes should be sent to Forest Hills Mennonite Church, 100 Quarry Road, Leola, PA 17540, by Oct. 20, 2000.

- **Mennonite Publishing House:** job opening for a ***maintenance person*** in the maintenance department to work 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday. Applicant needs strong mechanical skills with building skills highly desirable.

  Submit resume to Awanda Pritts, Human Resources Office, Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683; <apritts@mph.org>.

- **Kings View Mental Health System** (KVMHS), a Mennonite-sponsored not-for-profit organization, seeks a visionary ***chief executive officer*** with strong financial acumen to lead its multisite organization in central California. Headquartered in Reedley, KVMHS provides a broad range of outpatient behavioral health services, social services and residential services for adolescents from 20 locations in a 10-county area. Minimum candidate requirements are: active Christian involved in local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, master's-level education, 8 years of senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills. Preferred candidates will have extensive health-care and multisite management experience.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **Amigo Centre**, a camp/retreat center ministry in southern Michigan, has the following staff needs:

  Food service manager starting as soon as possible. This person is responsible for menu planning, food ordering, staff scheduling, some cooking, etc. This is a full-time salaried position with benefits. Salary depends on experience. Housing may be available on grounds if needed.

  Dining hall hostess starting as soon as possible. This person would be responsible for setting up for guest groups, hosting the groups and cleaning up after the groups. This is a one-year VS position.

  Office manager beginning Oct. 1. Duties include bookkeeping, database management, registrations, mailings and general office responsibilities. This is a full-time salaried position. Salary is dependent on experience.

  If interested in any of the above positions, contact Dana Sommers at 616-651-2811; <Dana@Amigocentre.org>, or write Amigo Centre, 26455 Banker Rd., Sturgis, MI 49091.

- **Is God calling you** to use your administrative and leadership skills in a new location? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for capable people to fill these and other leadership roles starting June 2001:

  Country director, Jakarta, Indonesia: This job, which could be shared, involves leading the planning and budgeting process for the 25-member MCC team, living in six different locations. Current programs include rural community development, university teaching, church relations and conflict mediation and peace building. The director(s) will also have the opportunity to learn to know and work closely with some of the 75,000 Mennonites who call this tropical archipelago home. Four to six months of language study would be provided.

  Country representative, El Salvador: Doing this job involves working with an experienced, committed MCC team, community and church leaders to discern new ways to do God's will in El Salvador, an ever-changing country that is slowly building a culture of reconciliation and peace after more than a decade of war. Key qualifications: Spanish language proficiency and team facilitation skills.

  To learn more about these two jobs, or other leadership roles within MCC, contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151; email <cdb@mail.mcc.org>.

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This turkey won't fly

by Rachelle Schlabach

An editorial in the *Atlanta Constitution* summarized the prospects for a national missile defense system, commonly known as Star Wars, by saying, "This turkey shows no signs it can fly." Only one of three tests of the Star Wars system was successful, yet the proposed system remains popular among both Republicans and Democrats. And while Congress is eager to fund its steep price tag—which could run as high as $150 billion—domestic social programs remain underfunded.

The United States cites North Korea, a country devastated by famine over the past five years, as one of its greatest security threats. Ironically, as domestic pressures build for a national missile defense, the North Korean threat is slowly diminishing.

In the past several months, this isolated country began formal talks with South Korea, and according to some reports agreed to halt development of its missile systems and offered to give up its long-range missile program in exchange for assistance with its space program.

Meanwhile, Russia, China and the European Union oppose a U.S. missile defense system, claiming it would set off a new global arms race and violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

Most troubling is that many Americans feel they can find security in building a missile defense system. The Bible teaches that security is found only in God, not in the idolatry of a missile defense system that does not work, robs money from social programs, relies on an exaggerated threat and angers our allies around the world. Such an idol is merely a turkey that should never get off the ground.

Rachelle Schlabach is legislative associate at the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office.

The Bible teaches that security is found only in God, not in the idolatry of a missile defense system.

Health-care justice on the hill and at home

by Karl S. Shelly

In the mid-1990s, after Congress tried but failed to address the U.S. health-care crisis, Rep. Jim McDermott (D-Wash) had mixed feelings. He had offered the only proposal in the House which, according to independent reviewers, would bring health-care coverage to all 44 million uninsured Americans. Yet unusually heavy lobbying by the insurance industry defeated his plan.

"I'm disappointed because our failure to act now will only serve to make the crisis worse," said McDermott. "But I'm not discouraged because when Congress is forced to deal with this issue again, the pressure for comprehensive reform will be even greater."

Polls show affordable and effective health care to be the leading concern for most Americans. Since 1994, more than 1 million people a year have lost their health insurance coverage. Nearly 44 million Americans go without coverage. This erosion of coverage stems from the continuing decline of employer-provided insurance, high insurance premiums and welfare reform's detrimental effect on Medicaid (health insurance for the poor).

Many elected officials have sought to show their concern by supporting various incremental reform measures. But proposals that fail to move significantly toward providing all people with basic health services lack vision and reality. The goal of health-care reform should be universal coverage.

Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in health care is the most shocking and inhumane." By seeking justice in health care we follow the healing ministry of Jesus, who restored health and wholeness to individuals and communities. May we be mindful of this as we choose our elected officials and as we witness in the church to God's kingdom.

Karl Shelly is pastor of Assembly Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind. He formerly served with Mennonite Central Committee as domestic concerns legislative associate at the MCC U.S. Washington Office.

Mennonite church could do better on health care

Nearly every U.S. Mennonite congregation has members who couldn't obtain affordable health care when they needed it most. The Mennonite Church's Resolution on Health Care in the United States (1993), states: "The church is called to respond to this crisis through its biblical concern for both healing and social justice. . . . We call for a health-care system that provides access to basic health care for everyone, everywhere in the United States."

If, as the resolution claims, "our concern for justice in health care arises from our belief in the sanctity and dignity of persons created in God's image," then we are remiss if we tolerate this injustice within our fellowship. Some congregations, such as Assembly Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., have resolved that they will assist every member without health insurance to obtain adequate coverage.

We can also challenge Mennonite Mutual Aid, which sells health insurance, to find new ways of doing mutual aid in today's health-care environment. By creatively demonstrating the compassion of Christ in our churches, we gain integrity and knowledge. We can then call upon elected leaders to enact national reform. In other words, if we have a different vision to offer the world, we need to live it—not just lobby for it.—*Karl S. Shelly*

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Gordon Houser

The true church

I am the true vine.—John 15:1

Early last month, the Vatican released a declaration saying that the salvation of non-Catholics is "seriously deficient." Understandably a number of non-Catholic leaders were perplexed if not offended by the statement and said that it "threatens to turn back the clock on ecumenical dialogue and muddy the theological waters," according to a Religion News Service account.

Before we raise our hackles and point our anti-Catholic fingers, let's remember that Catholics are not the only group with members who consider their church the true one.

I have dear friends who belong to the Eastern Orthodox Church. I've worshiped with them (though Communion is closed to non-Orthodox worshipers) and have always been warmly received by the congregation. But their theology clearly states that the Orthodox Church is the one true church. My friends just don't talk about that.

In my college days, when I was a proud fundamentalist, I encountered tiny denominations who felt they had the true grasp on the gospel and had organized themselves as "a New Testament church." I also harbored feelings that a true church would have to have certain qualities that agreed with what I believed. I allowed that there were some true believers in some mainline denominations and even in the Catholic Church, but they weren't the majority.

As we try to figure out just what church is or should be, let's seek to cling to Christ, the True Vine, both as individuals and as worshiping groups.

A recent issue of *Mission Frontiers* magazine says that 33 percent of the world's people are Christian. Yet elsewhere it claims that only about 12 percent of the world are "believers," by which it means Evangelicals.

Mennonites are not immune to this kind of thinking. How many times do we refer to non-Mennonites (which, by the way, make up about 99.99999998333 percent of the world's population) as if they are not up to snuff?

While we may dislike the Vatican's statement (one with which many Catholics disagree), let's admit that it is stating what many groups believe about themselves.

A church ("ecclesia" in Greek) was originally an assembly of people who got together to make decisions. The early church, initially a sect of Judaism, was a group of many of these assemblies.

Yet, according to *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, "the early church never considered itself merely a voluntary association of individuals." Rather, "it constituted the faithful remnant of God's people who had recognized the coming of the Messiah and soon understood its mission in universal terms (cf. Matthew 28:19)."

Later, after the schism between the Western (Roman Catholic) and Eastern (Orthodox) churches during the first millennium, the so-called "visible unity of the church" was broken. Not until 1965 did the two groups withdraw their mutual excommunications.

Protestantism (in the 16th century) brought the concept of the church as invisible, an inner rather than a visible reality.

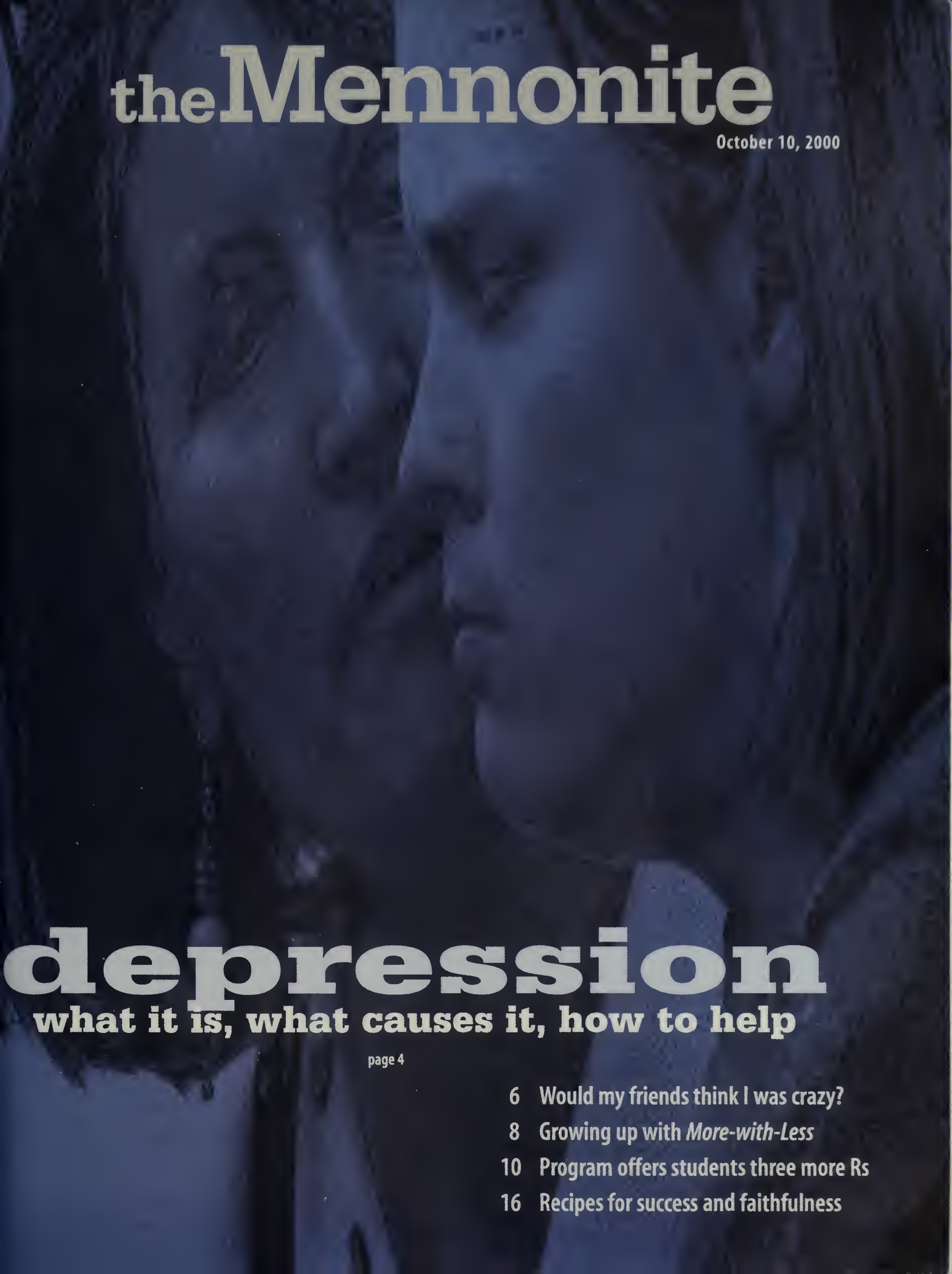
Anabaptists, I suspect, would want to combine these two concepts and say that our being the church is based on our commitment to Christ, but that commitment needs to have a visible reality as well. But Mennonites, with all our own schisms, have little to be proud of.

According to *The Prologue from Ochrid*, an unnamed Orthodox monk was lazy, careless, disinclined to prayer, but throughout his life he had never judged anyone. When he lay dying, he was full of joy. His fellow monks asked him how he could die so joyfully with all his sins, and he said he had seen the angels, who showed him a page with all his sins. He said to them: "The Lord said, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' I have never judged anyone, and I hope in the mercy of God." And the angels tore up the sheet of paper.

As we try to figure out what church is or should be, let's seek to cling to Christ, the True Vine, both as individuals and as worshiping groups. And let's withhold our judgments about what constitutes the true church and let God decide.—*gh*

the Mennonite

October 10, 2000



depression

what it is, what causes it, how to help

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6 Would my friends think I was crazy?

8 Growing up with *More-with-Less*

10 Program offers students three more Rs

16 Recipes for success and faithfulness

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Setting precedents

I cannot help but feel deeply disturbed when I read that the Hopewell District of Atlantic Coast Conference and the Cornerstone District of Virginia Conference intend to withdraw from the denomination ("Transformation Casualties Continue," Sept. 26). Such withdrawals represent a failure of humility and the commitment to honor our covenant of mutual discernment and mutual accountability.

Each of us has a tendency to believe we are more theologically right than someone else, and each of us is tempted to sever relations with those whom we deem wrong. But the gospel forbids us from making ourselves the ultimate theological judge. Rather, Jesus and Paul call us to discern the truth together, to be mutually accountable and to have the humility to cooperate with other believers with whom we disagree. When we walk away from the covenanted community of churches to which we belong, we are saying we will accept mutual accountability and discernment only on our own terms (which is not mutual accountability or discernment at all).

The Hopewell and Cornerstone churches may very well form their own covenanted community of churches, but what will keep them together when they disagree with each other? They have already set a precedent for the unending fragmentation of the body of Christ. *—Ryan Ahlgrim, Indianapolis*

Educational competition

The Aug. 29 issue raised some interesting issues. Rich Preheim's report on the first orientation for new Mennonite college and seminary faculty members ("First Orientation Educates Educators") states that fewer than 30 percent of Mennonite students attend Mennonite colleges compared with 50 percent two decades ago. I also read "The Q Class" by Jim S. Amstutz, in which he was prompted to attempt a new approach to baptismal preparation because church is just one of many options for many youth today. In many respects, he might be answering the concern raised in Preheim's article.

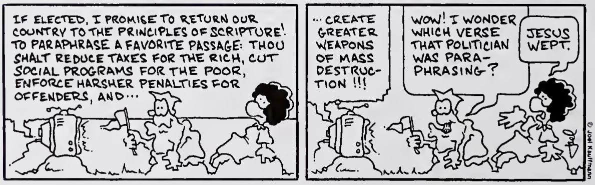
When I prepared to attend a school of higher education in the 1950s, my options were few. In my home congregation, I could count the number of people who had attended college or university before me. What a difference today. Not only are the youth attending institutions of higher learning in unprecedented numbers, but the options of places and programs have increased tremendously compared with when I was at that point in life.

If the church wishes to attract more Mennonite youth to its colleges, it might have to attempt new approaches. I recall that Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., used to contact prospective students personally. That happened to me at least once during my youth. I didn't attend there, but the interest and goodwill which it created still stand out in my mind.

Maybe taking a good look at the recruitment program and taking risks in developing new strategies is one answer that might enable Mennonite youth to see the church colleges as a good choice. But we must face the fact that competing choices are much greater today than in bygone years.*—Kenneth Cressman, New Hamburg, Ont.*

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


IF ELECTED, I PROMISE TO RETURN OUR COUNTRY TO THE PRINCIPLES OF SCRIPTURE! TO PARAPHRASE A FAVORITE PASSAGE: THOU SHALT REDUCE TAXES FOR THE RICH, CUT SOCIAL PROGRAMS FOR THE POOR, ENFORCE HARSHER PENALTIES FOR OFFENDERS, AND...
...CREATE GREATER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION !!!
WOW! I WONDER WHICH VERSE THAT POLITICIAN WAS PARAPHRASING?
JESUS WEPT.
© Joel Kauffmann

Important guidelines

I was disappointed to see myself quoted from the Constituency Leaders Council meeting in such a partial way as to seem to be minimizing the importance of guidelines ("New Membership Guidelines Receive Consensus but Little Enthusiasm from CLC Representatives," Sept. 26). I consider the guidelines to be very important. Every one of us at those meetings does, or we wouldn't be spending those days of intense, demanding, energy-consuming interaction to produce something that will serve the denomination.

It is accurate that I said I do not consider guidelines to be the same as rules or law. But I said some things I do look to guidelines for that are much stronger than "taking them into account," which by itself sounds flip and superficial. I see guidelines as marking the path ahead, much as the white lines that mark a road guide us as we drive. They set direction, and they express agreed-upon teaching positions that are essential as we make future decisions together. It would grieve me if this incomplete quote would contribute in any way

theMennonite

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

to misunderstanding where we have worked hard to build bridges.—*Mary Ellen Meyer, Goshen, Ind.*

The Pharisees' role

Eddy Hall errs in implying that Jesus was killed by Pharisees or because he criticized Pharisees ("If Sinners Were Jesus' Friends, Who Were His Enemies?"). The plot against Jesus came from the high priest Caiaphas and his father-in-law, Annas, who were Sadducees (Acts 5:17) and who accused Jesus before Pilate. The Talmud (Pesachim 57a) and Josephus (*Antiquities* 20:199) described Annas' family as being heartless and engaging in calumnies.

The high priests feared that Jesus would cause the Romans to intervene violently (John 11:47-51). We know that the Romans massacred a messianic pretender named Theudas and his followers (Acts 5:36, *Antiquities* 20:97-99). This also explains why the high priest questioned Jesus about being the Messiah, a claim that was not blasphemy, despite the high priest's claim.

The Pharisees are not mentioned in the Passion narrative except about guarding the tomb. David Flusser has suggested, based on Seder Olam Rabbah chapter 3 and Tosefta Terumot 7:20, that the Pharisees considered it a sin to hand a Jew over to a foreign authority.

When the high priest persecuted the early church, Gamaliel the Pharisee objected (Acts 5:34). A generation later, when the high priest illegally executed James, the head of the church, the Pharisees objected and successfully petitioned the Roman governor to have the high priest deposed (*Antiquities* 20:200-203). I've dealt with the nonrole of the Pharisees in the death of Jesus because this is persistently misunderstood. Hall, however, is correct that Jesus strongly criticized some Pharisees.—*Jon Olson, Pittsburgh*

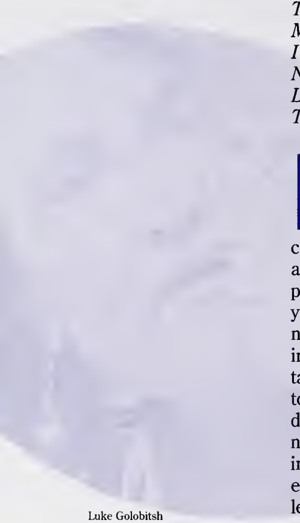
Cover photo by Luke Golobitsh

Depression is not the end

What is depression? What causes it? What can you do about it?

by Carl N. Rutt

I'll change my state with any wretch
Thou canst from gaol [jail] or dunghill fetch.
My pain's past cure, another Hell,
I may not in this torment dwell!
Now desperate I hate my life,
Lend me a halter or a knife.—Richard Burton,
The Anatomy of Melancholy (1620)


Luke Golobitsh

Depression is both a passing symptom and a devastating illness. It is a disturbance of mood and means feeling sad, low or blue. If you're depressed, you can't concentrate and you forget things. You aren't hungry, and food tastes bad. Sleep is poor. You lose self-respect. People notice that you look tired, walk slowly or appear to have no energy. Your voice gets softer. You stay indoors, ignore the ringing phone and get irritable with your family. When you visit the doctor, you tell her you feel empty or that you don't have any feelings. You may have abdominal or chest discomfort. Guilt about real or imagined mistakes plagues you. You lose interest in sex. Time moves slowly. You feel hopeless and don't expect to get better.

Studies show that without treatment the average person will stay depressed about nine months. No one can predict, however, if you will be average. It's not fair to yourself or your loved ones to do nothing. Fortunately, antidepressant medications help 80 percent or more of depressed people.

Several factors may increase your vulnerability to depression:

- You may be predisposed to later depression if, as a youngster, you lose a parent or your parent is emotionally unavailable. Physical, emotional and sexual abuse also cause enduring psychological scars.
- Childbirth brings joy and exhilaration—and "baby blues." If these turn into postpartum depression, you are desperately ill and require psychiatric care. Society expects you to be happy, but you feel horrible and can't pull yourself out of it.
- Alcohol abuse and depression often occur together. Alcohol is a depressant and worsens mood, and depression itself increases drinking. Physical illnesses such as heart disease, hypothyroidism and parkinsonism are often associated with depression.
- Grief is the normal reaction to loss of a loved one through death or divorce, or loss of something highly valued such as a job. Your grief will not resolve unless you talk about your loss and rebuild your life through new emotional attachments.
- If you don't prepare for retirement you might feel useless when you get there. Declining physical strength and loss of vision and hearing also contribute to depression risk. The downside of a long, enjoyable life is letting go.

In *Paradise Lost*, John Milton describes profound despair: "O dark dark dark, amid the blaze of noon, / Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse / Without all hope of day!"

Suicidal thoughts: Derogatory auditory hallucinations often haunt the profoundly depressed person. "You are no good," the voices say. "You're the worst person who ever lived. Do away with yourself." Suicidal thoughts progress to urges and actual plans. The thought of suicide terrifies friends and family members. Fortunately suicidal wishes can pass, so protecting the individual during the time of risk is crucial. Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) is life-saving for some, and many will testify to its benefit. ECT acts quickly and is occasionally safer than medications.

What causes depression? Years ago, psychological theory held that anger turned inward caused depression. Since then researchers have examined the nature vs. nurture dichotomy and divided depression into "endogenous" (spontaneous) and "reactive" types. These views are now outdated. Who you are by birth and what you become through life experiences cannot be fully disentangled.

Current depression research focuses on chemical imbalances involving norepinephrine, dopamine and serotonin. However, there may be 100 chemicals that affect your mental functioning. Your amazing brain is a neural network with 100 billion nerve cells and over 100 trillion connections or synapses. It is far more complex than a computer. Your mind is woven inextricably into your brain, allowing you to feel surprise, ecstasy and immense suffering.

Depressed children and adolescents have difficulty believing the future will be better. If your parents said you were stupid or were "a mistake," you are carrying a burden that medicine cannot cure. Family history studies show that depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and other disorders run in families.

Telephone a friend and enjoy a good laugh. Spend time on a hobby you enjoy or go for a walk. Exercise gets your brain endorphins flowing, and these endorphins make you feel good. Health is precious. Take time to work, sleep, play and to love your family and friends. Take time for God.

The good news is that most people get over depression. However, 50 percent of individuals who experience a first episode of major depression will get depressed again. Studies show that without treatment the average person will stay depressed about nine months. No one can predict, however, if you will be average. It's not fair to yourself or your loved ones to do nothing.

Fortunately, antidepressant medications help 80 percent or more of depressed people. Prozac, its recent chemical cousins and other medications have revolutionized depression treatment. If you are severely depressed, medication combinations are often helpful. Lithium stabilizes manic mood swings (bipolar disorder) and sometimes alleviates depression. Depakote and Tegretol were developed to prevent epileptic seizures and also help regulate mood swings. Saint-John's-wort and other herbs available over the counter may benefit mild depression, but they are unpredictable.

In the "old days"—30 or 40 years ago—you and your therapist explored together why you got depressed, even if this took a long time. Today people want to get well quickly, and health insurance demands that, too.

Research shows that cognitive-behavioral therapy is particularly beneficial. The therapist teaches the depressed person how to replace distorted perceptions ("I am no good") with positive ideas ("I am loved by God, and God doesn't make junk"). Right thinking is crucial. If you are content to be a passive victim, you will not get better.

Ponder the Serenity Prayer: "Lord, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference." When you carry the world's weight by yourself, you wallow in the world's misery. Support groups such as Emotions Anonymous and organizations such as the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill and the National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association provide hope and emotional support for many people.

Spiritually active people: All healing comes from God, including the tools that we use for mental healing. "Earth has no sorrows that heaven cannot heal," wrote Thomas Moore. Using scientifically valid techniques, researchers such as Harold Koenig of Duke University show that practicing your faith, attending church and living a spiritual life improve your health. Spiritually active people recover from illnesses better and may even live longer. Your pastor should appreciate assisting you in your recovery process.

The apostle Paul warns us not to think of ourselves too highly, but the corollary is that we should not belittle ourselves. "I am fearfully and wonderfully made," writes the psalmist, so we must practice self-care. We often find it difficult to keep everything in balance. We add things to our schedules but don't drop old duties. Our schedules become our masters.

Antoine de Saint Exupery wrote, "The only really important time in our lives is the time we waste with those we love." Telephone a friend and enjoy a good laugh. Spend time on a hobby you enjoy or go for a walk. Exercise gets your brain endorphins flowing, and these endorphins make you feel good. Health is precious. Take time to work, sleep, play and to love your family and friends. Take time for God, "in [whom] we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

Carl N. Rutt is medical director at Oaklawn in Goshen, Ind.

Where you can find help for depression

Mennonite Health Services sponsors eight mental health facilities in the United States and Canada. Visit the MHS web site at <www.mennonitehealthservices.org>.

Brook Lane Health Services, Inc.
P.O. Box 1945
13218 Brook Lane Drive
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301-733-0330

Eden Health Care Services
P.O. Box 129
204 Main Street
Winkler, MB, Canada R6W 4A4
204-325-5355

Family Life Resource Center
250 E. Elizabeth Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801
540-434-8450

Kings View Corporation
P.O. Box 512
42675 Road 44
Reedley, CA 93654
559-638-2505

Oaklawn
P.O. Box 809
330 Lakeview Drive
Goshen, IN 46527
219-533-1234

Penn Foundation, Inc.
P.O. Box 32
807 Lawn Avenue
Sellersville, PA 18960
215-257-6551

Philhaven
P.O. Box 550
283 S. Butler Road
Mount Gretna, PA 17064
717-273-8871

Prairie View
P.O. Box 467
1901 E. First St.
Newton, KS 67114
316-284-6400

Would my friends think I wa

People with mental illness need the support of their congregations.

by Muzet Felgar

As I stood to take the microphone that Sunday morning, I wondered what I thought I was doing. Was I actually going to stand up and share this with my congregation? I felt afraid, ashamed. Would parents in the congregation think I was unfit to be the children and youth minister? Would my friends turn away from me? Would they call me crazy, out of my mind, emotionally disturbed (I'd actually heard that one before)? Maybe I was.

Yet something in that worship service impelled me. My Lord Jesus Christ loves and cares for me, I thought, and so will his people. Shaking, I took the microphone. I told my congregation I had been suffering with depression since the previous fall. I said I had been on medication but was not finding relief. I said I knew the stigma that follows mental illness, and I hated feeling imprisoned because of it. So on that January morning I spoke out. Just like I am now as I write this article.

The main reason I stood up that Sunday to take the microphone was to ask for healing and prayer. I wasn't intending to speak out. But I realized as I spoke that I was also asking for acceptance and thus advocating for everyone with mental illness. I was asking people to let go of the stigma attached to mental illness. I had no idea how my congregation would react, but I suppose I must have believed they would accept me and care for me. The following months proved just that.

Immediately after the service, several people, male and female, approached me. They offered love, hugs and prayers. Some offered suggestions of medications to try or psychologists to see. Others shared their stories. I couldn't believe how many people in my congregation had known someone or had themselves suffered with a mental illness. I had never heard these stories. Our church had recently studied for the second time the book *No Longer Alone: Mental Health and the Church* by John Toews. Yet I had never heard from the people who approached me now. Many had kept their pain a secret, and some of them still needed the safety of anonymity. My congregation continued in the months that followed to send cards, offer prayers, make phone calls and simply ask me how I was doing. I never felt alone.

From the larger church, however, I felt disregarded, even denounced. During the time I was struggling to become stabilized, I needed to take some time away from committees and other work I was doing in the church. I contacted members and told my story. Not all the committees turned away from me. Some embraced me and prayed for me. But others seemed not to want to look at me or speak with me, and if they did they never brought up what was going on with my illness. This was painful to me. I could accept this outside the church but not within my own denomination. I felt hurt.

Then I realized that perhaps people didn't know how to react. They were not purposely hurting me; they were unable to respond because they didn't know how. I realized that many people have been taught and believe that the Bible says mental illness is a punishment for sin. I disagree. I have a limited knowledge of mental illness, but I do know family members and friends who have suffered with schizophrenia, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (which I also live with), attention deficit disorder, bipolar disorder and clinical depression. I do not believe they are all being punished with mental illness. I do believe, however, that we may never understand why mental illness occurs or how to cure it completely.

I also believe that Christ calls us to comfort the suffering. 1 Corinthians 12:24b-26 says: "But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, that there may no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it." Let us heed Christ's call and quit creating divisions among ourselves; let us unite in care and comfort of one another.

My experiences with my family members, friends and my own illness have led me to believe that only a few things are required to comfort those suffering with a mental illness. Congregational members and other supporters need to educate themselves about the illness, share their personal stories, offer care and help to the families of the mentally ill, help financially, provide a hug or a smile, and pray with them and for them.

It took several months for my medications and therapy to stabilize me, and now I am struggling to be healthy and wanting to say, Give people with mental illness a chance. We have so much to offer.

Muzet Felgar is the children and youth minister at First Mennonite Church Richmond, Va.

I was asking people to let go of the stigma attached to mental illness. I had no idea how my congregation would react, but I suppose I must have believed they would accept me and care for me. The following months proved just that.

Luke Golobitsh

Congregational members and other supporters need to educate themselves about the illness, share their personal stories, offer care and help to the families of the mentally ill, help out financially, provide a hug or a smile, and pray with them and for them.

MENNOS AT WORK

David A. Yost, Pinetop, Ariz.

Congregations: Shalom Mennonite Fellowship, Tucson, Ariz., and Community Presbyterian Church, Pinetop, Ariz.

Occupation: family practice physician, medical director

Years in occupation: 10

Why I do what I do: I joined the Indian Health Service in 1990 as an anticipated transition to what I considered "real missions"—overseas. However, I came to appreciate the endless possibilities for service and learning while working among the 15,000 members of the White Mountain Apache tribe in the isolated mountains of eastern Arizona. I encountered people who have been bureaucratically beaten for decades and are forced to contend with a 40-percent unemployment rate, overwhelming alcoholism and long-forgotten public health quagmires such as tuberculosis and malnutrition. I enjoy the company of a superb group of colleagues, who shun more prestigious and financially rewarding jobs to offer their skills in a setting where health-care resources are often lacking. With a physician-to-patient ratio that is half the national average, each day stretches my skills and challenges my creativity in solving health-care crises using only the barest of budgets and staff.

The role of faith in what I do: Working in a community calloused by years of inefficient and often paternalistic government help, I have the opportunity to put an individual touch to what can easily become a faceless health-care bureaucracy. I have discovered a spiritual community that appreciates someone willing to bring a Christian perspective to traditional government policies. The best expression of my faith often comes through sitting in quiet support beside patients and community members as they go through births, wakes and family crises. Such opportunities to share my faith develop over years, and the patience God has taught me through my work has become a cornerstone of my spiritual life.

Growing up with *More-with-Less*

Cookbook was big part of lives of author's daughters

MCC photo by Tony Siemens

Sisters Marta van Zanten (left) and Cara Longacre Hurst leaf through a copy of *More-with-Less Cookbook*, which was authored by their mother, Doris Janzen Longacre.

LANCASTER, Pa.—Marta van Zanten has some idea what it's like to be the child of someone famous.

Marta and her sister, Cara Longacre Hurst, are the daughters of Doris Janzen Longacre, well-known speaker on world hunger and author of *More-with-Less Cookbook.* Doris died of cancer in 1979 but left a legacy found in bookshelves and cabinets around the world.

"When I went to Conrad Grebel College [Waterloo, Ont.], people would ask me to sign their copies of the cookbook," Marta recalls with a laugh. "I asked, 'What do you want me to write?' and they would usually say something like, 'Good luck on your cooking endeavors.' They just got a kick out of it."

First published in 1976, Herald Press last month issued a 25th anniversary edition of *More-with-Less Cookbook.*

After Mennonite Central Committee assignments in Vietnam and Indonesia, the Longacre family moved to Akron, Pa., where Paul—Cara and Marta's father—became an MCC administrator. With the help of friends, Doris developed ideas for a cookbook focusing on how to eat and live responsibly in light of world food needs. MCC agreed to sponsor the project.

Although Doris did much of her work in the MCC office, she brought home countless potential recipes for 9-year-old Cara and 7-year-old Marta to test. "Most of them were good, but not all of them," recalls Marta.

Marta, who now lives in Langhorne, Pa., turns to page 174 in the cookbook and one of Doris' own recipes. "We are the children in 'Our-Children-Love Liver.' That's us," she says.

"Mom could just whip things up," says Cara, who lives in Lancaster, Pa. "She'd look at what vegetables we had in the garden and experiment."

After *More-with-Less* was published, Cara accompanied her mother to cookbook demonstrations. "It was in the days before people here did a lot of stir-frying, so she demonstrated her stir-fry and I helped her chop vegetables," she says.

Marta tells of selling the new cookbook at the MCC relief sale in Harrisburg, Pa. "It cost $5.95, I think," Marta says. "And Dad gave us a bunch of nickels so we could give people change.

"And I just remember how overwhelmed my parents were that it sold so well. It really took off much more than anybody's expectations. I remember it got very exciting."

A year after the cookbook was completed, Doris learned she had cancer and began working on her second book, *Living More with Less.* "She wanted to do something meaningful again," says Paul, who lives in Harrisonburg, Va.

Doris died in 1979 before *Living More with Less* was finished. Paul completed two of the chapters and in the preface wrote: "The unfinished manuscript itself may be symbolic. The task of living responsibly is never finished."

Cara was 13 and Marta 11 when their mother died. Both women value the cookbook, not only because their mother wrote it, but also because they frequently use it.

"I still make a lot of the same recipes that Mom made, and they're my favorites," says Cara, who especially likes breads and "gado gado," an Indonesian vegetable dish. She also uses the cookbook to make "pflinzen," thin Russian pancakes. "They remind me of my grandmother—my mother's mother," Cara says.

"You sort of go through a stage growing up when you reject things," Marta says. "I remember complaining that we were eating stir-fry again. Dad always made stir-fry. But sure enough, we went to college and what did we make?"

"Stir-fry," Cara and Marta confess in unison.

While they have spent virtually their entire lives with *More-with-Less,* the sisters continue to learn from it. "I'm still discovering new recipes," Cara says.—*Maria Linder of MCC News Service*

More-with-Less Cookbook
Doris Janzen Longacre

Since it was first published in 1976, *More-with-Less Cookbook* has gone through 47 Herald Press printings for 642,500 copies. Another 200,000 copies have been produced by other publishers, including British and German editions. Herald Press last month released a 25th anniversary edition, including comments by the cookbook's users.

"I call it my 'scratch-and-sniff' cookbook," writes Marlene Harder Bogard of Newton, Kan. "If the page is full of markings (food or otherwise), the recipe is likely a tried and true favorite."

Htun Soe, a Goshen (Ind.) College freshman from Burma, reads to children at a local school during the college's service day on Sept. 20. Total fall enrollment at the U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church colleges and seminaries is 4,688, an increase of 2.5 percent over last year and the second consecutive year student numbers have gone up.

Mennonite college and seminary enrollment up 2.5 percent, increases for second year in a row

Enrollment at the U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church colleges and seminaries has gone up for the second consecutive year as five of the six schools reported gains in student numbers.

Total enrollment for the fall semester stands at 4,688, up 2.5 percent from 4,573 last fall. This year's total includes 304 seminary students and 276 graduate students.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., posted the greatest percentage increase from last year, jumping 5.7 percent, from 477 students to 506. It is Bethel's first enrollment increase since 1996.

Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., had the second biggest gain, going from 174 students to 184, a change of 5.4 percent.

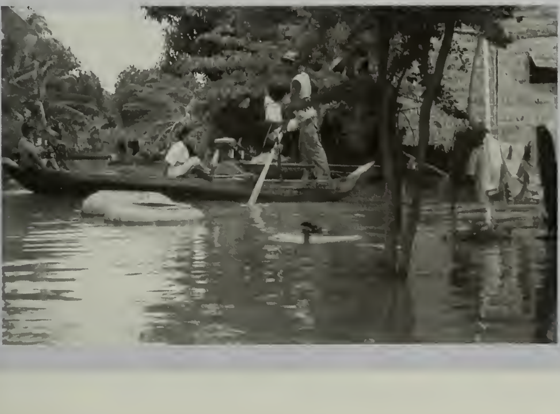
Student headcount at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., rose 4.8 percent, from 1,393 to 1,463. EMU received a big boost from its four graduate programs, which saw enrollment grow 33 percent over last year, to 215 from 145. Eastern Mennonite Seminary's enrollment increased to 120 students this fall from last year's 99.

Graduate students also propelled an enrollment increase at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Sixty students have registered for master of arts programs in education and organizational management, compared with 16 students last fall. Overall, Bluffton's student numbers went up 4.2 percent, from 1,015 to 1,059, marking the sixth consecutive year the number of students has topped 1,000.

Hesston (Kan.) College added three more students to its enrollment since last year, registering 435 this fall.

Enrollments: a comparison

	1999	2000
AMBS	174	184
Bethel	477	506
Bluffton	1,015	1,059
EMS	99	120
EMU	1,294	1,343
Goshen	1,082	1,041
Hesston	432	435
TOTAL	4,573	4,688



EMM photo by Darrell Caldwell

High-water help

Residents of Utdong, Cambodia, float through the village's streets, flooded by several weeks of heavy rain. "Large parts of Cambodia are under water," say Eastern Mennonite Missions workers Darrell and Susan Caldwell, who are helping with a church plant in Utdong. "It's the worst flooding in the history of Cambodia." Members of Prince of Peace Mennonite Church in Phnom Penh, the nation's capital, recently spent a Sunday distributing rice in Utdong. The flooding has destroyed much of this year's rice crop, while, ironically, some areas of Cambodia remain so dry that rice and vegetables have withered. EMM is exploring options for assisting flood victims in Cambodia as well as in Laos, Thailand and Vietnam, which have also been affected.

Program offers students three more Rs

Tampa, Fla., congregation creating community leaders

TAMPA, Fla.—Shantia didn't like authority, and she didn't hesitate to let her mother and teachers know it.

As a result, Shantia had to repeat sixth grade at Dowdell Middle School in Tampa, Fla. But that gave her a second chance to hear the life lessons taught by Walter Crawford.

"Her attitude was real bad," Crawford says. "Listening and obeying authority was something she simply refused to do."

Crawford teaches classes in the 3R Project at Dowdell, started in 1992 by College Hill Mennonite Church to make a difference in Tampa's urban problems. The project's three Rs are:

- Reality—dealing with the daily situations the students face, both at school and at home;
- Religion—talking about choices and consequences;
- Recycle—having the students who have had success in the program, like Shantia, return to tell their stories to others.

As a result of her participation in the 3R Project, Shantia made good on her second chance in sixth grade, receiving the Most Turned-Around Student Award. Now, as a seventh grader, she is an office helper and has even spoken to Crawford's classes about the lessons she learned.

Crawford, senior associate pastor at College Hill, teaches the 3R program at Dowdell Middle School in a middle-class neighborhood on Tampa's southeast side. Although most of his classes are with sixth graders, he also teaches seventh graders and includes eighth graders during a weekly peer session and during summer classes.

A rainbow of African-Americans, Asians, Caucasians, Hispanics, Indians and Native Americans make up Crawford's classes. Last year, through his sixth- and seventh-grade classes, he made contact with 1,100 students.

Lesson topics include communication skills, relationships with parents and teachers, sexual relationships, conflict resolution and positive attitudes. "There's nothing they can't ask me, but I will answer it factually," Crawford says.

Although he makes it clear that the 76-member College Hill Mennonite Church sponsors the program, Crawford enjoys the support of the principal, teachers and parents. Parents must sign a consent form for their child to participate in the classes, but Crawford says it is rare not to receive that permission.

Teachers support the program because 3R projects, such as an essay-writing contest, mesh well with classroom goals. Through Crawford's interaction with teachers and parents and based on the results on report cards, he knows students benefit from his classes.

"I tell the teachers I'll show them at least a 20-percent reduction in bad behavior," Crawford says. "They can see the difference at the end of the year."

But he does more than just teach in the classroom. He makes home visits to talk with parents, serving as a liaison between the teachers and the community. He also teaches the parents. Three times a year he gathers the parents, serves them a meal and encourages them to be good parents.

"I give constructive criticism," Crawford says. "A lot of parents don't have time to be parents because they're always working."

He urges networking between parents and between parents and teachers to give the children a solid foundation for learning and for life. "We want to see these kids raised in the best way possible," Crawford says.

Some of the parents and other members of the community volunteer to mentor the children or to serve as role models with short classroom presentations. Others help Crawford teach the classes.

He has had requests to expand the program and says he thinks it could be adapted to the elementary level. "I see the need instead of going higher to go lower in the elementary," Crawford says.

The 3R Project originally conducted classes in several Tampa schools, but Crawford felt he could better communicate his message by concentrating on one school. Since he begins teaching at the sixth-grade level, he can track the progress of the students as they advance to seventh and eighth grades.

But Crawford's goal reaches beyond the school walls. He wants to build a better community through better communication. "In 10 or 20 years from now, hopefully we'll get some good leaders," Crawford says. "I put them in God's hands and keep them in my prayers that they'll be the kind of leaders we want in this community."

One of them could be Shantia. After years of defying authority at every turn, she now talks seriously about becoming a teacher.

—Gary Kauffman of MBM News Service

Bigger is better for Bethel organists

The Bethel College chapter of the American Guild of Organists (AGO) will put the pedal down and air it out Oct. 15 as part of what is being billed as the world's largest organ concert.

Called "Pipes Spectacular," the AGO-organized event will showcase more than 2,000 performers in 200 concert events across the country on a single day.

The North Newton, Kan., school's AGO chapter will hold three miniconcerts that day: at 4 p.m. in Kauffman Museum on the Bethel campus, at 4:45 p.m. in the Administration Building Chapel, and at 5:30 p.m. at Bethel College Mennonite Church.

Performers will include Bethel students, faculty and alumni.

South Americans meet for children's conference

SANTA CRUZ, Bolivia—Representatives from 10 Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) partner organizations in South America met for a week in Santa Cruz this summer to share ideas on working with children.

"As leaders of programs, we often lack opportunities in South America to meet with professionals in our field," says Andres Zorilla, who serves with PRONATS, an MCC program in Santa Cruz which hosted the conference. "This particular group shared a deep camaraderie and bond through their ties to the Anabaptist church tradition."

Topics ranged from hygiene to Anabaptist theology. "The discussion on character formation and discipline was fantastic," says Cecelia Calderon, who works with a day-care center run by Iglesia Menonita Dios Viviente (Living God Mennonite Church) in Guayaquil, Ecuador, for children of low-income families.

Plans are under way for another conference to be held next summer in Bogotá, Colombia. *—MCC News Service*

Workshop puts farm issues on Canada's agenda

LETHBRIDGE, Alta.—The economic woes affecting agriculture are also taking their toll in the church. Mennonite Church Canada took a look at those issues at a workshop during its annual assembly this summer.

"People are hurting within our church," said Art Wiens, a pastor and farmer from Herschel, Sask. "We have to learn how to manage change without being enslaved by it."

Florence Driedger's experience with a farm crisis hotline in Saskatoon had her wondering whether the situation is a farm crisis or a family crisis. She said that women and children feel the crisis' impact first.

The workshop led to a resolution that food, faith and farming issues be given prominence at the next assembly, scheduled for 2002. *—Mennonite Church Canada News Service*

MBM Ghana assignment was black and white

ELKHART, Ind.—Sam Dinius' recent Mennonite Board of Missions stint in Ghana was colored by his race. He recently served five weeks helping build dormitories at MBM-supported Good News Theological College and Seminary.

But as a white person from the United States, Dinius, a member of Lockport Mennonite Church in Stryker, Ohio, says he experienced a wide range of receptions. While he received the place of honor at church services, he also encountered youngsters in the market who would burst into tears and start screaming when they saw him.

Dinius' race even affected his work. "I could tell that my boss had a hard time telling me what to do," he says. "He saw me as this rich American."*—MBM News Service*

by the way ...

The Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective has 696 biblical references.

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ENGLAND, SCOTLAND & WALES	JUNE 29 TO JULY 13
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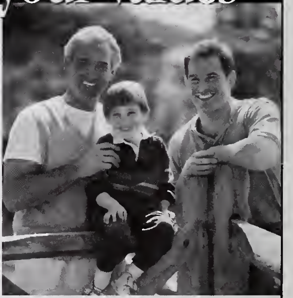

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Workers

Crockett, Robert, was ordained May 21 for ministry at House of Power, Elkhart, Ind.

Crockett, Maria, was licensed May 21 for ministry at House of Power, Elkhart, Ind.

Fry, Paul and Rosemary, Goshen, Ind., have begun a one-year assignment with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) in Ireland at a retreat center.

Hartman, Gene, was licensed and installed June 11 as pastor of Emma Mennonite Church, Topeka, Ind.

Martin, Kelly G., was licensed Aug. 20 as youth pastor for Bowmansville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Martin, Randall J., was ordained July 9 as lead pastor for Habecker Mennonite Church, Washington Boro, Pa.

Miller, Jerry and Becky, Elkhart, Ind., have begun a three-year MBM assignment as hosts at the London Mennonite Centre.

Schmidt, Dennis, has begun as director of Christian education at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.

Speigle, Wayne, has concluded a pastorate at First Mennonite Church, Richmond, Va.

Births

Baughman, Hannah Grace, Sept. 15, to Lewis Baughman and Jenae Clark, Shawnee, Okla.

Butterworth, Margaret Jean, Sept. 19, to Janelle (Seitz) and Richard Butterworth, Falls Church, Va.

Ediger, Abby Reed, Sept. 14, to Deanna (Johnson) and Wesley Ediger, Inman, Kan.

Grieser, Caleb David, Sept. 18, to Amy (Krauss) and Jason Grieser, Wauseon, Ohio.

Miller, Carson Mylin, Aug. 22, to Janelle (Yoder) and Sherlin Miller, Middlebury, Ind.

Teichroeb, Dakota John, Aug. 12, to Nicole (Kennel) and Timothy Teichroeb, Albany, Ore.

Williams, Isaac Vaughn, July 13, to Amy Williams, Goshen, Ind.

Yoder, Simia Noel, Aug. 22, to Carl and Jenny (Evans) Yoder, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Ashby/Coblentz: Julia Ashby, Hartville, Ohio, and Kevin Coblentz, Hartville, Sept. 9 at Hartville Mennonite Church.

Clark/Swartzendruber: Jaime Clark, Canon City, Colo., and Nick Swartzendruber, Colorado Springs, Colo., Aug. 26 at Beth-El Mennonite Church, Colorado Springs.

Flowers/Kling: Sunshine Flowers, Middlebury, Ind., and Daniel Kling, Goshen, Ind., Sept. 16 at Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Fox/Swartzendruber: Angie Fox, New Paris, Ind., and Kevin Swartzendruber, Glen Ellyn, Ill., Aug. 5 at Silverwood Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Hochstetler/Hostetler: Scott Hochstetler, Thailand, and Rachel Hostetler, Archbold, Ohio, July 29 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Lind/Yoder: David Lind, Three Rivers, Mich., and Kendra Yoder, Akron, Pa., July 1 at Akron Mennonite Church.

Lohrentz/Ritter: Greg Lohrentz, Hesston, Kan., and Jane Ritter, Ellicott City, Md., Sept. 2 at St. John's Episcopal Church, Ellicott City, Md.

Lowe/Wagler: James Lowe, Akron, Ohio, and Janette Wagler, Akron, Sept. 16 at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Schultz/Tabilon: Christopher Schultz, Phoenix, and Sheila Tabilon, Phoenix, July 22 at Sedona, Ariz.

Deaths

Gering, Rumie, 93, Freeman, S.D., died Aug. 27. Spouse: Grace Gering (deceased). Parents: Jonathan and Lena Gering (deceased). Survivors: children Jonathan, John. Funeral: Aug. 30 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

Peachey, Ivan, 67, Belleville, Pa., died Sept. 11 of heart failure. Spouse: Ruth Peachey. Parents: John and Katie Spicher Peachey (deceased). Other survivors: children Kathy Beimborn, Betty Ross, John, Diane Yoder, Shirley, Karen Byler; 18 grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 14 at Belleville.

Schrock, Priscilla, 92, Archbold, Ohio, died Aug. 21. Parents: Daniel and Ida Schrock (deceased). Funeral: Aug. 26 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Stalter, LeAnna Miller, 83, Middlebury, Ind., died Aug. 26. Spouse: Earl Stalter. Parents: Sam and Sarah Schlatter Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Virginia Kramer, Darlene Kujawski, Richard, Dennis; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 30 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Weaver, Robert II, 29, Millersburg, Ohio, died Sept. 14 from a brain hemorrhage. Parents: Robert and Kathy Weaver. Memorial service: Sept. 17 at Walnut Creek (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Yancey, Bertha Beyer, 79, Lowville, N.Y., died Sept 2. Spouse: Edward Yancey. Parents: Walter and Martha Beyer (deceased). Other survivors: children Herbert, Edward, Theodore, John, Gordon, Timothy, Virginia Lyndaker; 17 grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 5 at Lowville Mennonite Church.

Yankey, Lewis, 97, Criders, Va., died Aug. 18. Spouse: (1st) Mary Ann Thomas Yankey (deceased); (2nd) Ressie Viola Mitchell Yankey (deceased). Parents: William and Victoria Yankey (deceased). Survivors: children Carroll, Harold, Donald, Richard, Charlotte Crider, Bernice Keplinger, Jean Estep, Shirley Kuykendall, Linda Stultz, Lennis Dove, Sharon Lantz, Brenda; 32 grandchildren; 51 great-grandchildren; 13 great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 22 at Valley View Mennonite Church, Criders.

Mennonite Central Committee invites applications for the position of

DIRECTOR of International Program

Key qualifications include: International leadership experience; Understanding of global mission; Ability to think and plan strategically within a complex organization.

All MCC workers are expected to exhibit a commitment to a personal Christian faith and discipleship; active church membership; and nonviolent peacemaking.

Starting date: June 4, 2001
Location: AKRON, Pennsylvania
Applications will be accepted through DECEMBER 1, 2000

Direct inquiries to: Charmayne Brubaker or Becky Stahly, MCC Human Resources, PO Box 500, Akron, PA 17501, phone 717-859-1151, fax: 717-859-2171, email: cdb@mcc.org or rss@mcc.org

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Mennonite Central Committee 717 859-1151
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classifieds

- **Menno House**, a live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2001. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Rocky Mountain Mennonite Relief Safe** for MCC, ***Oct. 20-21*** at the Arkansas Valley Fairgrounds in Rocky Ford, Colo. 1938 John Deere A tractor, Heywood Wakefield bedroom set, Singer treadle sewing machine, lanterns. <www.emclj.org/sale.htm>

- **First Mennonite Church** of Richmond, Va., seeks a full-time ***pastor***. We are a multiethnic/racial metropolitan congregation that desires seminary-trained candidates committed to Anabaptist beliefs. Reply to Bill Ellis, PO Box 1463, Richmond, VA 23218; <wbellis@juno.com>.

- **Friendship Community** has an opening for ***program coordinator and program supervisor***. This is an opportunity to impact a life and enrich your own. If you possess a college degree and at least 2 years of experience with people with mental retardation, please call Amy Horst, 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **Belleville Mennonite School**, a private, Christian school located in central Pennsylvania with a pre-K-12 program, seeks ***administrator***. Qualifications: master's degree and/or experience in administration. Position available June 1, 2001.

  Contact Theil Kauffman by Nov. 30 at 131 French's Lane, McVeytown, PA 17051; 717-248-5733 (O); 717-899-6930 (H); <talc@acsworld.net>.

- **Doylestown Mennonite Church**, 590 N. Broad St., Doylestown, PA 18901, will be celebrating its ***225th anniversary*** Sunday, Oct. 22, 2000. The theme is "Celebrating God's Leading." We are looking forward to former pastors and members in attendance.

  For more information, call 215-345-6377; fax 215-345-9513; <doylestownmc@juno.com>

- **Forest Hills Mennonite Church** seeks ***youth and young adult pastor:*** spiritually mature person with a passion for spiritual nurture of MYF and young adults. Work as part of a pastoral team and with member volunteers (good interpersonal skills needed). Training and/or experience required.

  Written inquiries and resumes should be sent to Forest Hills Mennonite Church, 100 Quarry Road, Leola, PA 17540, by Oct. 20, 2000.

- **Mennonite Publishing House:** job opening for a ***maintenance person*** in the maintenance department to work 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday. Applicant needs strong mechanical skills with building skills highly desirable.

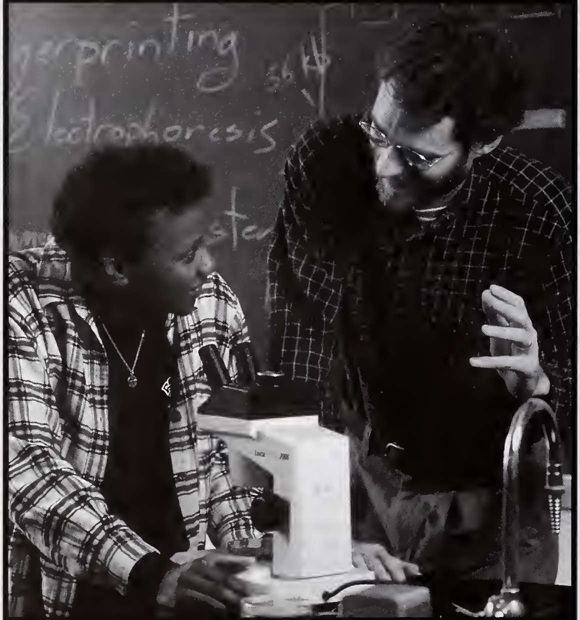
  Submit resume to Awanda Pritts, Human Resources Office, Mennonite Publishing House, 616 Walnut Ave., Scottdale, PA 15683; <apritts@mph.org>.

- **Western Mennonite School**, as part of an expanding and growing program, seeks a ***facilities manager***. Full-time position; management and supervisory experience necessary to lead a team that maintains and cares for facilities, plant and grounds. The campus has 7 buildings and is located on 40 acres just outside of Salem, Ore., in the beautiful Willamette Valley.

  For more information, contact Jerry Stutzman, Director of Finance, 9045 Wallace Rd. NW, Salem, OR 97304; 503-363-2000; <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

- **Kings View Mental Health System** (KVMHS), a Mennonite-sponsored not-for-profit organization, seeks a visionary ***chief executive officer*** with strong financial acumen to lead its multisite organization in central California. Headquartered in Reedley, KVMHS provides a broad range of outpatient behavioral health services, social services and residential services for adolescents from 20 locations in a 10-county area. Minimum candidate requirements are: active Christian involved in local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, master's-level education, 8 years of senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills. Preferred candidates will have extensive health-care and multisite management experience.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.



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by Gordon Houser

A list of books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Let All Who Thirst: Hymns for Piano, performed by Lucia Unrau and arranged by Peter Terry (Faith & Life Press, 2000, $15.95 CD, $10.95 cassette), is the newest release in the Hymnal Masterworks collection, presenting hymns from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*.

Journey to Japan: Growing Together in Christ (Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Overseas Mission, 2000, $15 rental) is a mission education packet featuring instructions for a Japanese meal, multigenerational activities and a Japanese Mennonite-style worship service. It is available free to Mennonite congregations. Call 800-999-3534.

How the Children Became Stars: A Family Treasury of Stories, Prayers and Blessings from Around the World by Aaron Zerah (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $16.95) provides 52 weeks of stories, prayers, table blessings and daily activities all aimed at bringing families together in the pursuit of the sacred in the everyday.

Open Door Books (CRC Publications, 2000) provides resources and program support to churches that want to start literacy programs as a way to reach into their communities. The three components, written ecumenically for adult new readers at a third- to fifth-grade reading level, are *Life Stories*, *Open Door Bible Studies* and *Faith Questions*. For information call 800-333-8300.

Mennonite Central Committee Resource Catalog 2000/2001 lists videos, periodicals, posters, brochures, fliers, booklets and exhibits available from MCC, P.O. Box 500, Akron, PA 17501-0500, <mailbox@mcc.org>.

Silent Weapon: The Embargo Against Iraq (Institute for Development Training, 2000, $19.95) is a video and study guide to help educate adult study groups to advocate for peace in the Middle East and for an end to the U.S. sanctions against Iraq.

The Savior of Science by Stanley L. Jaki (Eerdmans, 2000, $18) shows the role theology has played in fruitful scientific development.

The Good Listener by James E. Sullivan (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $8.95) says that the ability to listen has the power to offer profound healing, comfort and affirmation.

The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work and Ministry in Biblical Perspective by R. Paul Stevens (Eerdmans, 2000, $24) argues that dividing the church into two "peoples"—clergy and laity—is not only biblically wrong but practically counterproductive.

Circle of Grace: Praying With—and for—Your Children by Gregory and Suzanne M. Wolfe (Ballantine Books, 2000, $25) asserts that family prayer often leads directly to the spiritual awakening of both children and parents. It includes modern and ancient prayers for all occasions, plus an extensive annotated list of resources on prayer.

We, the Ordinary People of the Streets by Madeleine Delbrêl (Eerdmans, 2000, $24) contains a series of reflections by a Catholic layperson whose conviction and insight led her to a life of social work in the atheistic, communist-dominated city of Ivry-sur-Seine, France. Delbrêl, who died in 1964, has been compared to Dorothy Day.

Artists, Citizens, Philosophers: Seeking the Peace of the City—An Anabaptist Theology of Culture by Duane K. Friesen (Herald Press, 2000, $16.99) gives attention to questions of aesthetic experience and judgment, responsibilities in civic life and interactions with scientific and religious knowledge.

Does the Owl Still Call Your Name? Paths of Struggle and Renewal, edited by Bruce Brand (Indian Life Books, 2000, $8.95), deals with eight areas of addictive behavior: gambling, fetal alcohol syndrome, sexual abuse, alcohol, pornography, sexual brokenness, solvent abuse and suicide.

Social Ministry: An Urgent Agenda for Pastors and Churches by Haskell M. Miller (Herald Press, 2000, $9.99) offers a step-by-step guide to understanding issues of justice, the pastor's social responsibility, social action types, theology and challenges.

Living in God's Embrace: The Practice of Spiritual Intimacy by Michael Fonseca (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $12.95) guides readers through the ups and downs of their spiritual journeys.

Recommended reading

Do I Still Have a Life? Voices from the Aftermath of War in Rwanda and Burundi **by John M. Janzen and Reinhild Kauenhoven Janzen (Publications in Anthropology, 2000, $25) includes stories from survivors of the 1994 massacre in Rwanda. The authors interviewed people shortly after the war while working for Mennonite Central Committee. The book not only offers eyewitness accounts of the killing but reports the faith of various participants, including MCC. While this may be of particular interest to anthropologists, it includes many illustrations and is easily accessible to the general reader. The drawings by children of what they saw are particularly haunting.—*gh***

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Rich Preheim

Recipes for success and faithfulness

God's kingdom is akin to a feast, Scripture tells us. So it is appropriate that we celebrate a cookbook.

The reason is not so much that we like to eat (which we unquestionably do). Rather, it's that for nearly a quarter century, *More-with-Less Cookbook* has been shaping us from within and from without so that we may witness to the God who feeds us body and soul. In fact, the book has come to be a major influence defining contemporary Mennonitism.

Herald Press last month released the 25th anniversary edition of *More-with-Less* (see page 8). It was first published in 1976, growing out of a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) focus on food and hunger. The idea was to help people eat in ways that are healthy and nonexploitative of the earth and its inhabitants. "At its best, [the book] tells us that Mennonites—a people who care about the hungry—are on a search," author Doris Janzen Longacre wrote in the first edition's preface. "We are looking for ways to live more simply and joyfully, ways that grow out of our tradition but take their shape from living faith and the demands of our hungry world."

The most striking aspect of the 25th anniversary edition of *More-with-Less* are the accounts showing the book as an agent of church growth as people wrote in saying how it drew them into Mennonite circles.

Since then, *More-with-Less* has gone through 47 Herald Press printings. Nearly 850,000 copies have been sold worldwide, generating $546,000 in royalties for MCC.

Certainly the numbers testify to the book's phenomenal success. But *More-with-Less* has helped prod us to greater faithfulness—a success that cannot be quantified by sales figures. The 25th anniversary edition is peppered with testimonies of that. "*More-with-Less* has been a reminder that discipleship extends into all of life, including the kitchen," writes Holly Blosser Yoder of Wellman, Iowa.

Gently yet firmly, *More-with-Less* does not let us forget the interdependence of all of creation and our Christian responsibility for it. North Americans' excessive consumption of food (as well as other goods and materials) threatens the world's resources and other peoples who rely on them. We overspend on food. We put our health at risk by what we eat. Meanwhile, 800 million people in the world suffer from malnutrition.

Nevertheless, *More-with-Less* overflows with joy as it provides alternatives to our culture's destructive food patterns. Joy at gardening and canning, seeing God's creation directly provide for our needs. Joy at preparing food in bulk, allowing us to share God's bounty with others. Joy at children being drawn into the holiness of cooking and baking in addition to eating—and then discovering that their favorite foods may come from Mexico or Pakistan and not McDonald's or Pizza Hut.

The most striking aspect of the 25th anniversary edition of *More-with-Less* are the accounts showing the book as an agent of church growth as people wrote in saying how it drew them into Mennonite circles. "I didn't realize *More-with-Less* was Mennonite until about a year ago when my husband and I started exploring the possibility of becoming Mennonites," related Amy Spencer of Riverside, Iowa. "When I found out, how could I consider not joining?!"

June Mears Driedger describes herself as a "cookbook convert." She didn't know any Mennonites while growing up in Los Angeles. When she was introduced to *More-with-Less* on an overseas mission assignment, Driedger considered the folks responsible for the book as "kindred spirits." "I decided to seek out Mennonites when I returned home," she wrote. "Four years later I joined Pasadena (Calif.) Mennonite Church."

Today Driedger is pastor of Michigan State University Mennonite Fellowship in Lansing.

So to celebrate God's blessings to us through *More-with-Less,* prepare a banquet of moussaka and West African groundnut stew, curried split peas and baked lentils with cheese, dandelion salad and pumpkin soup, Koinonia granola and Jamaican baked bananas.

And maybe pastor Driedger can lead us in grace.—*rp*

the Mennonite

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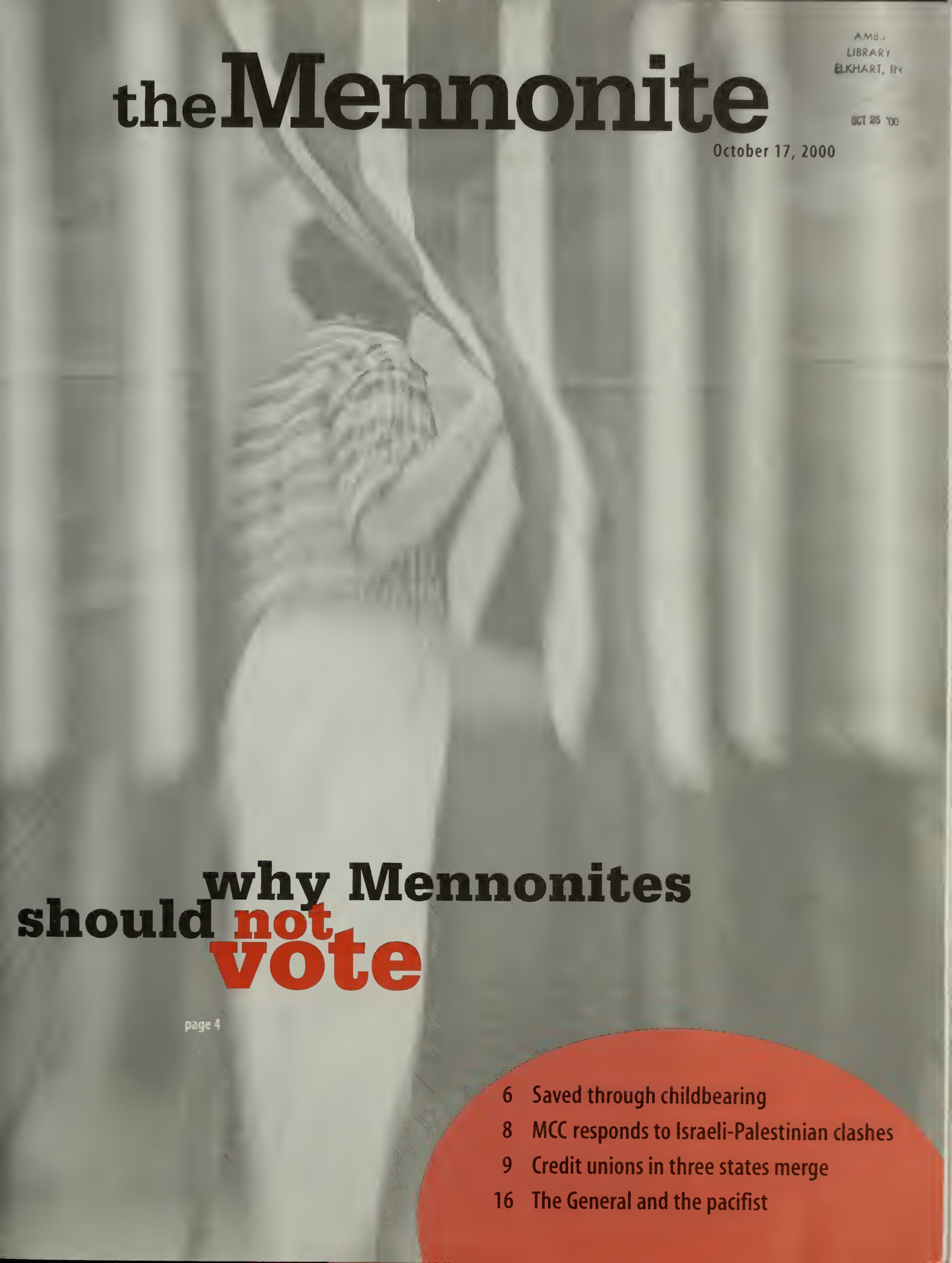

why Mennonites should not vote

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The human condition

I have been enjoying the new series on "Difficult Texts of the Bible." I was especially inspired by Ryan Ahlgrim's outline of the first 11 chapters of Genesis in the Oct. 3 issue ("Not by Giants or by Heroes"). I only wish that he had continued this outline through the rest of the book, which in my mind gives God's positive solution to the human condition.

God acts in three ways: (1) In Abraham, God calls us into holy covenant with himself; (2) in Isaac, God is the redeemer God who provides the substitutionary atonement that we might live; and (3) in Jacob, God is the transforming God who transforms Jacob out of his cheating, conniving ways into Israel, a person who has power with God and with people. God also transformed Jacob's situation so that he might meet his brother Esau in peace.

But God's solution to the human condition is not complete without the human response, which we see in Joseph and his brothers. His brothers repented, confessing the wrong they did to Joseph and their father. And Joseph forgave them.

So in Genesis the human condition of sinfulness is overcome by the acts of the covenant-making, redeeming, transforming God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as we come to him like Joseph and his brothers truly confessing, repenting and forgiving all who wrong us.
—John F. Murray, Kouts, Ind.

Idolatrous guidelines

A "right on" to Paul Peachey's "When Idols Sneak Back In" (Sept. 26). If idols are what we cling to when we Mennonites draw the line on our church/conference/denomination polity, then we must be quite an idolatrous denomination. Peachey could have mentioned the surface issue that focuses our disagreement over the proposed new denominational polity and guidelines: homosexuality. If I read Peachey right, the pressure groups that would coerce congregations into welcoming practicing homosexuals would be as idolatrous as pressure groups that would coerce congregations into rejecting them for membership.

If our foundation really is Jesus Christ, we have a live, vibrant foundation among us. Change and diversity are part of God's created order in the universe. Idol worship in our case as Mennonites leads to destroying change and diversity. Let's turn back to Jesus, the true foundation, and come alive. Finding the answer for all Mennonites for all time is no longer an appropriate agenda. Let's start confronting sin among us without compromise on Jesus' foundation of compassion, forgiveness, tolerance and truthfulness. If so, change will come our way. Let's read the New Testament or the whole Bible and note the recorded changes in sin definitions through biblical history. We aren't alone. Jesus is among us now too. With these understandings, I find the joint polity and guidelines proposal far too idolatrous.
—Dave Graber, Hardin, Mont.

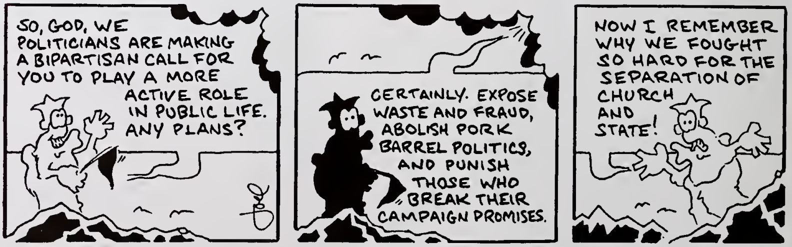
Good and evil

Re "Straight to the Source" (Readers Say, Sept. 26): While I agree that God created everything, I believe we must be careful in saying that God "created" evil. Allowing for such a conclusion would logically require that we also accept that God created sin, for what is more evil than sin?

Simply because God gave us the freedom to exercise our ability to choose between good and evil does not mean that God created evil. It does mean that God gave us the ability to respond to his love or reject it, to choose his path or to follow our own way. To say that God created evil simply because he allowed us the

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


SO, GOD, WE POLITICIANS ARE MAKING A BIPARTISAN CALL FOR YOU TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN PUBLIC LIFE. ANY PLANS?
CERTAINLY. EXPOSE WASTE AND FRAUD, ABOLISH PORK BARREL POLITICS, AND PUNISH THOSE WHO BREAK THEIR CAMPAIGN PROMISES.
NOW I REMEMBER WHY WE FOUGHT SO HARD FOR THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE!

theMennonite

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readers say

choice to follow him or not to follow him is an indictment on the holiness of God. How can a God that is all love create hate? How can he who is kind create unkindness?

I believe it is important to remember that we were originally created and placed in a perfect place with only one rule to follow. It was the human race that rejected this love and chose to follow our own way. It is each of us who have chosen to do so who are responsible for the existence of evil, not an all-loving, all-caring God.—*Neal D. Clemens, Walnut Creek, Ohio*

Wrapped up

As we listen to each other and allow the Holy Spirit to make us one, I think of the ways Jesus broke God's laws of purity and separation to include us and bring us joyfully home in arms made strong with love. Our proper respect for laws and doctrines should not be institutionalized so as to prevent our walking in the steps of our Savior, who violates the code to fulfill the highest demands of love. Could we meet in the arms of Jesus and hold each other while we discuss the ethical and spiritual benefits and limitations of creedal legalism? Before we settle for something less than the high call to love?—*Walter S. Friesen, Newton, Kan.*

Age by age

It has been fun reading the letters to the editor in regard to the age of the earth. I would submit that we cannot determine the age of our earth by the age of the materials that make up the earth. One could cut a wooden beam from a newly built structure and count the rings. This would only give us the age of the tree used to make the beam—not the age of the building. Hebrews 11:3 is helpful for my simple mind to understand a truth confounding to many.—*Lyn Hershey, Payette, Idaho*

Cover photo by Gordon Houser

The rites and rights of voting

Reflections on a presidential election

by John D. Roth

One warm evening in August, as our family watched Al Gore accept the Democratic nomination for the presidency, my youngest daughter turned to me and asked, "Who do we vote for?" Her older sister quickly corrected her use of the collective pronoun. "Every person votes for herself," she said, "and besides, Dad doesn't vote." The ensuing conversation on faith and civics may not have been as dramatic as the televised pageantry of the Democratic National Convention. But as the election season heats up again this fall, and as Mennonites across the United States face the inevitable barrage of political bromides and promises, we would do well to reflect anew on the relationship of our Christian convictions and Anabaptist theology to the civic ritual of voting.

For most of Anabaptist-Mennonite history, in Europe, active participation in the political process was simply not an option, especially for a barely tolerated religious minority. That changed in the democratic context of the United States, where voting has come to symbolize the essence of a free, pluralistic society.

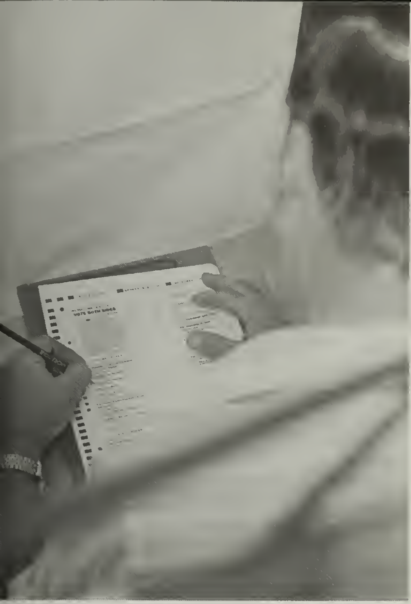
As the election season heats up, and as Mennonites across the United States face the inevitable barrage of political bromides and promises, we would do well to reflect anew on the relationship of our Christian convictions and Anabaptist theology to the civic ritual of voting.

Yet Mennonites in the 19th and 20th centuries have responded to the electoral process with great ambivalence. Most Mennonites in the General Conference Mennonite Church tradition have not hesitated to exercise their right to vote, seeing the political arena as a natural and inevitable context to express Christian values and moral convictions. For many in the "Old Mennonite" tradition, however—and for virtually all the Old Order Amish and Conservative Mennonites—voting in presidential elections has been fraught with questions. Though the number may be dwindling, many have consciously chosen not to participate in national elections as a position consistent with their Christian convictions.

Although we should not allow ourselves to be divided over this issue, it may be appropriate in this election year to at least consider why one might abstain from voting—not out of apathy but as a positive witness to the Christian faith.

1. Not voting in the presidential election is a practical expression of our pacifist convictions. Those in the voluntary, Believers' Church tradition of Anabaptism are agreed that the decision to become a Christian involves a choice, one with genuine consequences for our most basic understanding of reality. The heart of that choice is an affirmation of Jesus Christ as the one who saves us from our bondage to self-centered (or nation-centered) pride and who offers in his life and teachings a model of the true nature of power—a power, as Paul writes, "made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9). Becoming a follower of Christ entails therefore more than just a quantitative change in our actions (where we become a little more moral, decent or honest than everyone else); rather, it assumes that we will engage the world in a qualitatively different way. Indeed, every aspect of our lives should point to Christ's new understanding of power. As commander in chief of the armed forces, the president is explicitly charged with the duty of maintaining the military, defending our borders and preserving national interests through the use of violence, if necessary or expedient. If I as a follower of Christ could not conscientiously serve in that role, then how can I in good conscience cast my support for someone else to do that in my stead?

2. From the perspective of an Anabaptist Christian, differences among the presidential candidates are illusory. George W. Bush frequently appeals to the notion of compassion (a good thing, in my mind) but is also a staunch defender of capital punishment (something I think pacifists cannot support). Al Gore seems to care about the environment (so do I) but defends abortion (again, something I think pacifists cannot support). Adding to the confusion, both have assured the American public that they are absolutely committed to strengthening our military preparedness, and both espouse some version of an "America First" perspective on the world. So which candidate is the obvious choice for Mennonites? We might recall that it was Jimmy Carter—the last overtly evangelical Christian in the Oval Office—who reinstated registration for the draft as a gesture of our military preparedness in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In recent years, Mennonites have voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Republican candidacies of Ronald



Reagan and George Bush. Yet I wonder whether these administrations—or that of Bill Clinton—really represent the deepest values of our faith. Rather than making a dubious calculation about the lesser of two evils in this regard, perhaps one should consider refraining from supporting either option.

3. There is a symbolic and pedagogical value in not voting in a national election. In the past, Mennonites have paid a high price for their upside-down view of power—loss of property, forced emigration, imprisonment and even martyrdom have all been a part of our collective story. Now living in the lap of material abundance and prosperity, North American Mennonites could choose not to vote as a kind of spiritual discipline—a tangible reminder that our ultimate identity is not contingent upon the political process or dependent on the powers that be. Combined with a clear commitment to care for the sick, feed the hungry and bind up the wounds of the hurting, conscientious abstention from the presidential elections could be a powerful symbol of our conviction that true power—the primary locus of God's hand in history—resides ultimately in the gathered church, not among the policy makers in Washington. Voting, after all, is not just a right. It is also a rite—a ritual of identity and loyalty binding the individual to the nation. Abstaining from presidential elections could signal to our children and to the global Mennonite church that our first loyalty is to the worldwide fellowship of Christian believers, not to the nation-state.

4. The individualism of voting is in tension with our communal understanding of faith. If we believe we should vote our conscience—if responsible voting entails a process of moral discernment that is rooted in Christian convictions—then it seems to follow logically that Christians, or at least Mennonites, should be of one mind about the matter and agree to cast our vote collectively. But if Mennonites are going to defend the privacy of the voting booth and the inviolability of individual choice, as seems to be the case, then we seem to imply that the choice is merely a personal whim (some people like white bread; some like brown bread) rather than a profound expression of our faith or that the church's voice in this important moral decision is irrelevant. It would probably be best not to vote at all in the presidential race; but if our faith is to have any bearing whatsoever on the outcome of our choice, then we should agree on the candidate who best embodies our understanding of God's transformative work in the world and cast our votes together.

I do not wish to imply that my Mennonite brothers and sisters who go to the polling booths this November are being unfaithful Christians or are somehow turning their backs on the whole weight of the Anabaptist tradition. And I readily acknowledge that my convictions against voting are much stronger for presidential campaigns than local elections regarding county commissioners, school boards or tax levies. But as the airwaves thicken with appeals to our pocketbooks and our partisanship, I urge us to enter cautiously into the arena of national politics, to withhold absolute judgment about God's will in regard to any particular candidate and to give at least some passing consideration to an older tradition of conscientious abstention from this national ritual.

Conscientious abstention from the presidential elections could be a powerful symbol of our conviction that true power—the primary locus of God's hand in history—resides ultimately in the gathered church, not among the policy makers in Washington.

John D. Roth teaches history at Goshen (Ind.) College.

difficult texts of the Bible

> *I do not let women teach men or have authority over them. Let them listen quietly.*—1 Timothy 2:12 NTL

Saved through childbearing

The Pauline logic of 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Fourth in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by Reta H. Finger

There are good reasons why only 8.9 percent of pastors in the Mennonite Church and 17.7 percent of pastors in the General Conference Mennonite Church are women* and why some conferences still refuse to ordain women to pastoral ministry. One of them lies in the heart of 1 Timothy 2:8-15: "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over men; she is to keep silent."

Given the pervasive pigtails of my childhood, we Mennonites obviously didn't take that "braided hair" phrase too literally, and though most jewelry was banned for a generation or two in many Mennonite churches, little is said today.

This text is one of two in the New Testament that restrict women's roles in church. The other is 1 Corinthians 14:33-36, where women are also told to be silent. However, the latter cannot be universalized, since 11:5 in the same letter assumes that women will be publicly praying and prophesying.

The Timothy text, however, seems unequivocal, and the argument is clinched by referring to the Creation-and-Fall story itself. Eve was deceived by the devil; thus all women are easier prey to false teachings and therefore unfit for any authoritative role in the church.

Think paragraphs: I teach a course at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa., in which students learn how to read the different types of literature in the Bible. For New Testament letters, our textbook says (in all caps): THINK PARAGRAPHS! In other words, you can't know what a verse means unless you read it in context of the whole paragraph and then figure out how the paragraph fits into the letter's argument as a whole. When we do this for 1 Timothy 2:11-12, we are forced to relativize what had first seemed like a timeless principle.

The paragraph begins with verse 8, in which men "in every place" are told to lift their hands while they pray publicly. This instruction is just as forceful as verses 11-12, but I haven't heard many sermons preached on it. Neither do I see men obeying it. (I tell my students sometimes that if all the men at our college will always lift their hands when they pray, I'll stop teaching.)

Why don't we pay attention to this instruction? Probably because people instinctively know that lifting hands to pray was specific to that culture. Verse 8, then, should serve as a warning flag that the paragraph may contain other practices limited to a particular culture.

Not even a wedding ring? The second part of the same sentence tells women what to do instead of praying publicly: Dress modestly, do good works and learn in silence. Modest dress may be a timeless principle for both sexes, but the particulars given in verse 9 are Greco-Roman: no braided hair, no gold, no pearls, no expensive clothes. Given the pervasive pigtails of my childhood, we Mennonites obviously didn't take that "braided hair" phrase too literally, and though most jewelry was banned for a generation or two in many Mennonite churches, little is said today.

However, in the Greco-Roman world of Paul's day, a large gender gap existed, and women were expected to stay in the private sphere of the home rather than in public life. Women who moved into public life, attended banquets with men, had their hair professionally done and wore fine clothes and jewelry were seen as morally compromised, sometimes even as prostitutes. David Scholer, an evangelical New Testament scholar, once compared pagan literature of the Greco-Roman world of Paul's day with 1 Timothy 2:9-10. In every case, instructions were identical: Dress modestly, no gold or pearls, and be silent—in other words, stay out of public life.

Verse 15 also reflects the writer's concern that women maintain their normal societal role as mothers. This verse is hard to interpret, since nowhere else in the New Testament is childbearing related to salvation. But the noun "childbearing" can also refer to the whole process of bearing and nurturing children. The verse then becomes the capstone of this paragraph, offering hope to women who maintain their expected role in society. God will save you even when you don't publicly preach and teach the gospel like men.

Why social conformity? It is important to ask why the writer of 1 Timothy was so concerned that Christian women's roles reflect those of the pagan culture around them. The undisputed letters of Paul say nothing about this. When Paul does discuss marriage in 1 Corinthians 7, he is both countercultural and counter Roman law, suggesting that it is better that virgins not marry if they can control their desires. Paul also makes no attempt to stifle the Corinthian women prophets who are participating in worship in chapter 11.

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* Here are the numbers for active female pastors:
- GC—17.7 percent;
- MC—8.9 percent;
- dual—24.2 percent;
- total—13.2 percent.

Because of many differences between the undisputed letters of Paul and the Pastoral letters (1 and 2 Timothy and Titus), nine out of 10 New Testament scholars think the latter were written at least a generation after Paul's death by Pauline church leaders more conservative than Paul himself. Even those who do believe Paul wrote the Pastorals acknowledge that the situation has greatly changed from his earlier letters. In either case, the deep concern for propriety in the church at Ephesus means that women must have been challenging their proper social roles.

1 Timothy 4:1-3 warns against certain people who have renounced the faith and, among other ascetic practices, are forbidding marriage (v. 3). We know from other sources that asceticism developed among some Pauline Christians who thought the single life dedicated only to God was superior to ordinary married life (as in 1 Corinthians 7). 1 Timothy 5:3-16 provides further defense against this threat; here the writer instructs all widows under the age of 60 to remarry. Otherwise, he says, "they learn to be idle, gadding about from house to house … also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not say" (5:13).

These false teachers influencing the Ephesian church were probably male, but women would likely have been their most avid converts. An ascetic lifestyle attracted many Christian women, since it freed them from submission to a husband, high risk of death from childbirth and the drudgery of household labor. Also women were not educated, so they were more susceptible to any new ideas and religions that proliferated in Asia Minor. These Ephesian Christian women may have found new freedom in ascetic teachings and were eagerly teaching others.

Learn first; speak later: It is not therefore surprising that the writer forbids these women to teach or to usurp authority over the male leaders. First they must "learn in silence with full submission." The writer is not withholding education and Christian teaching from these women. If these are true Pauline churches, properly taught women are capable of teaching, even as Paul's earlier co-workers, such as Prisca and Phoebe, were church leaders and teachers (Romans 16:1-5; Acts 18:24-28).

An additional hint of this problem is found in the use of the Greek word "authentein" in verse 12, translated "authority" in the NRSV and NIV. However, the normal Greek word for authority in the New Testament is "exousia." Used nowhere else in the Bible, the contemporary usage of "authentein" had a negative connotation of "domineer" or "usurp authority," as the KJV translates it. This implies that certain women were undermining traditional lines of authority in the Ephesian church.

Equally culpable: The writer's argument from the Creation-and-Fall story in verses 13-14 highlights an important fact. To make their case stronger, many ancient writers were selective in how they used other texts. In saying Adam was formed first in verse 13, this writer is selecting the Genesis 2 and 3 account but ignoring Genesis 1:26-27, which describes the creation of male and female at the same time. But even the second account shows the man equally culpable, since Genesis 3:6 says that the woman gave the fruit to her husband, "who was with her and he ate" and sinned equally. In Romans 5:12-20, Paul uses Adam as the human representative through whom sin came into the world because Adam better suited his argumentative purposes there. But the Timothy text uses Eve in order to drive home a different point. Some ancient methods of interpreting Scripture were different from those we use today.

Knowing the cultural and literary background of 1 Timothy 2:8-15 can help us understand its limitations. Its instructions should not be regarded as universal principles that no woman at any time should ever teach or be in an authoritative position over any man. They are just as situational and culturally conditioned as the expectation that men should raise their hands when they pray. Today females are educated with males and are no more inclined to teach heresy than are men. Today most women in our culture, married or single, work for a living and hardly have time to be idle gossipers who nose into other people's business.

The selective application of verses 11-12 has done untold damage to our church by discouraging women who are capable of serving in many areas of church leadership, including pastoral ministry. We should be ashamed of the small percentages of ordained and licensed female ministers in our denominations. They reflect a refusal to take seriously the gifts the Spirit gives without regard for ethnicity, class or gender.

The selective application of verses 11-12 has done untold damage to our church by discouraging women who are capable of serving in many areas of church leadership, including pastoral ministry.

Reta H. Finger teaches New Testament at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa.

Canadian university 'a dream come true'

The newest Mennonite post-secondary school officially opened Sept. 22-24 with tours, music, sporting events and two services.

Located in Winnipeg and called Canadian Mennonite University, the new school joins Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Concord College and Menno Simons College, all in Winnipeg.

During a Saturday ceremony, the presidents of the three schools together lit a flame to kick off a capital campaign for the university.

"Each time one of these schools was founded, there were those who dreamed of working together at the task," said Concord president John Unger. "But the dream did not die. This weekend we formally open Canadian Mennonite University, a dream come true."

Theologian and professor Myron Augsburger of Harrisonburg, Va., gave the address at the Sunday afternoon service.

MCC photo by Rick Fast

Expressing their prayers for peace between the Palestinians and Israelis, Miller Stayrook of Silver Spring, Md., (right) and Paul and Dorothy Peters of Steinbach, Man., light candles in a ceremony during a tour to the Holy Land last year marking Mennonite Central Committee's 50th anniversary in Palestine. Recent outbreaks of violence in the Holy Land have led MCC to send $20,000 for medical supplies.

MCC provides $20,000 for medical supplies as Israeli-Palestinian clashes injure 2,000

WINNIPEG—As outbreaks of violence between Palestinians and Israelis sweep through the Holy Land, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) is sending $20,000 to be used for medical supplies, and more funds for relief may follow.

Alain Epp Weaver, MCC Palestine country co-representative, says MCC and other international organizations are determining an appropriate response. Volunteers have joined thousands of Palestinians in donating blood to understaffed and underequipped hospitals overwhelmed by the number of casualties. Violence since late September has claimed 70 lives and more than 2,000 injured.

MCC expatriate workers in the region are safe, says Janet M. Janzen, co-director of MCC's Middle East programs. "Unfortunately, our locally hired staff in Palestine are not necessarily safe and are living under constant fear and stress," she says.

The violence follows the Sept. 28 visit of former Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon to the Haram al-Sharif, or Noble Sanctuary, in Jerusalem, a site sacred to both Jews and Muslims. For Jews, it contains the sole remaining portion of their ancient temple. For Muslims, the site is home of the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa mosques marking the spot where tradition says Mohammed ascended to heaven.

Muslims, who hold Sharon responsible for the massacre of Palestinian refugees in two camps during Israel's 1982 war in Lebanon, consider the former defense minister's visit to the sanctuary a provocation. He was met by Palestinian protesters who joined arms to try and prevent his entry to parts of the compound.

That has sparked violence and demonstrations throughout West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem and even inside Israel.

"It's a massacre," says Alex Awad, a professor at Bethlehem Bible College, located a block from Bethlehem's northern checkpoint, where clashes between Palestinian protesters and Israeli troops have been breaking out. The college has temporarily closed its doors in protest and mourning.

Weaver says MCC's friends and partners are feeling sadness at the lives being lost, including several children.

"Frustration and anger are also felt with a moribund peace process which promised justice but has instead solidified the Israeli occupation, with a Palestinian Authority widely perceived as ineffective and corrupt, and with the international community for its indifference to Palestinian suffering," Weaver says.—*MCC News Service*

Mennonite Men

October 17, 2000

Mennonite Men began as an organization in the General Conference Mennonite Church. With the merger of the GCMC and Mennonite Church, Mennonite Men is now serving as the men's organization for Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. The purpose statement of Mennonite Men *"...aims to provide an Anabaptist perspective on manhood that speaks to current issues. Its goals are to promote Christian growth, provide service opportunities, church missions and education among the men of the church. Mennonite Men also helps resource men's groups in local congregations, promotes men's resources written or presented by Mennonites and helps develop materials on specific men's issues."*

10th MAN Church Building Program

Grants approved for congregations in Canada, Colombia, Mexico and U.S.

A priority for Mennonite Men is to provide church building grants to newer congregations through its Tenth Man church building program. Mennonite Men officers and representatives approved eight Tenth Man church building grants for a total of $289,700 (U.S.) to be awarded 2000-2004. Grants are made available by the several hundred donors, who each give an average of $200 per year for this work.

Two overseas churches funded with tithe

Beginning in 1999, Mennonite Men took action to tithe Tenth Man grants for helping to build churches overseas. The result of this action means that two churches will receive funds to help build or buy church buildings.

One grant for $10,000 (U.S.)will be given to Pueblo en Transformacion (People of Transformation), Mexico City. The congregation, located in the southwest corner of Mexico City, has outgrown their present facility. Their mission is to become a transforming community and to increase social ministry by starting a children's daycare center. When funds are available they will proceed with the purchase and renovation of a property. Funding is through CUMA, a Christian organization that is part of the Mennonite church in Mexico.

COM Photo

Children's club meeting in Mexico City

A second grant will help replace the church building of Iglesia Cristiana Mennonita de Colombia (Mennonite Church of Colombia), Armenia Quindio, Colombia, whose church was destroyed by an earthquake. Their present attendance is 100. The project calls for building a sanctuary, church office and bookstore as well as caretaker and guest living quarters. Construction has begun and will be completed when funds are available. The $2,700 (U.S.) grant is being funded through the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions.

Both churches welcome work teams and other assistance in any modification to the buildings as the ministry expands. People interested in helping should contact Mennonite Men.

Courtesy photo

Pastor Josef Berthold and son Micah provide worship music.

West End Mennonite Fellowship provides safe and healing community

West End Mennonite Fellowship, Lancaster, Pa., has purchased the former site of the bar/social club of American Legion Post 7, which was closed after neighbors repeatedly complained about late-night and early-morning disturbances caused by Post patrons. They will renovate it for use as a church. The layout is ideal for their ministry.

The purpose of West End is to welcome all people into a safe and healing community in which together they grow more like Jesus. For member Jody Davis, "Participation in West End Mennonite Fellowship means family. We can share our joys, sorrows and talents." Jody goes on to say that when she was invited she attended and felt welcome and special. "Finally" says Jody, "Don [Jody's husband] came and felt the same acceptance I did. We attended regularly and became members in 1998." One member who came to the church through repeated invitations from a friend says, "God knows where we need healing and gives us people like [those at] West End to help us with our healing and understanding of why we did things and how we can change."

Josef Berthold

West End Mennonite Church

West End Mennonite is a community outreach with a diverse membership that is ministering to the people of the community. Member Ann Martin says "West End is what some might call a 'seeker-friendly' church. We want to make the gospel accessible and relevant to all people, especially those who have not necessarily had strong or meaningful prior church experiences."

A Tenth Man grant of $27,000 (U.S.)has been approved for West End Mennonite Fellowship. Josef Berthold is pastor.

Transformation has meant several changes for Mennonite Men:

- Mark Kniss was appointed as representative to Mennonite Men's Laymen's Council, Mennonite Men's governing body, by Virginia Conference, representing the Mennonite Church (MC).
- Three additional appointments are in the process of being made to have adequate MC and Mennonite Church Canada representation on the Laymen's Council. One appointment will be from Mennonite Church Canada and two will be MC people from Pennsylvania and the central states.
- A Joint Ministries Agreement has been formed between Mennonite Men/Tenth Man and MC Canada through the Outreach and Church Planting Committee of the Ministries Commission.
- A number of MC area conferences have taken official action to affirm and support Mennonite Men.
- Tenth Man grants are now available to MC and General Conference congregations in Canada and the United States. Of the eight grants approved, two are overseas, two MC and four dual-conference congregations.
- Resources on men's issues are available to all congregations in MC USA and MC Canada as requested.

Vietnamese and Chinese share church building in Edmonton

Two congregations, one Vietnamese and the other Chinese, have purchased a church building

HỘI THÁNH TIN LÀNH
MENNONITE VIỆT NAM

Chau Dang

Edmonton Chinese and Vietnamese Mennonite Church building

Chau Dang

Edmonton Vietnamese Sunday morning worship service

and are using the same facility for their separate congregations in Edmonton. The building, with a seating capacity of over 200, is located in the heart of the Chinese and Vietnamese communities. The mission of the two churches is strongly evangelistic and service-oriented. The Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church began in 1989 and has a membership of 25 and attendance of 55. Ken Tse serves as pastor.

The Edmonton Vietnamese Mennonite Church began in 1995 with only a few families. Current attendance is approximately 100. Chau Dang serves as pastor. "During these years, many families and lives have been transformed" says Chau Dang. "Many lively testimonies have been shared about the positive and powerful work of the gospel in [people's] lives. The worship place has been moved from one location to another. Finally, we move to this permanent location. Praise the Lord for his love and faithfulness!"

The two churches are part of Mennonite Church Canada and the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta. The Edmonton Vietnamese and Chinese churches will receive a grant of $50,000 (Cdn.).

Book review

Sons of the Father: Healing the Father-Wound in Men Today, by Gordon Dalbey (Tyndale House Publishers, 1992)

Dalbey wrote this book for any who wonder what it is to be a son and authentic man. When a man becomes a father he brings to that task his own journey of being and becoming a son. Settled within the psyche of every father, of every male, is his own life as a son. That life no doubt has its "father-wounds," incidents of human failings and limitations, and "father-longings." Dalbey's book is for the man who dares to look at this basic facet of male life. And for Dalbey, it is Father-God who can work the wonder of healing and modeling.

Dalbey's writing and thinking are clear and easy to follow, informed by his own experiences in the Christian men's movement and pastoring, from which he draws many examples and anecdotes. Throughout he shares nuggets of wisdom: "A man is mature enough to seek a deeper relationship with his father when knowing the man becomes more important than getting an apology." "The truth that sets a workaholic free can only emerge from the question, What pain in your life does your constant working attempt to mask?"

This is a fascinating read for the just curious or those in pain.

Reviewed by Jim Jantzen, Newton, Kan.

Why Canadians will partner with Tenth Man

by Tym Elias

Why would Mennonite Church Canada develop a Joint Ministries Agreement with the Tenth Man program of Mennonite Men? This is the question the Outreach and Church Planting Committee (OCPC) of the Ministries Commission asked. Following are some answers.

First, Tenth Man is a direct way for people to contribute to specific projects. There is very little overhead and the opportunities abound. The regular $100 donations make a real difference to new congregations seeking to establish themselves in the communities where they minister.

Second, Tenth Man is a collaborative program: Decisions are made in partnership with national and regional committees. In this way, Tenth Man is a resource to the existing mission programs of our agencies. In Canada, the mandate for the OCPC is new work. The Tenth Man program of Mennonite Men is a valuable asset in fulfilling this mandate.

Third, mutual support is the genius of the Tenth Man concept. In the midst of the malaise of mission transformation, questions have been raised about the ongoing partnership between Canada and the United States. The Tenth Man building program is a practical way of demonstrating mutual support. Although we track Canadian dollars, we are committed to full support of all grant requests approved through our shared discernment process. This arrangement reflects the sentiment of the Ministries Commission to walk side by side with our U.S. colleagues.

Fourth, when representatives from Mennonite World Conference met with Mennonite Church Canada at the Boards and Commission meetings last March, they challenged us with the question, What gift does the Canadian church have to offer the global church? One of the obvious answers is our wealth. I am personally enthused by the recent developments in the Tenth Man program to extend building grants to congregations internationally! As a joint venture, North Americans can do a lot simply through faithful giving.

Tym Elias is staff person for the Outreach and Church Planting Committee of the Ministries Commission of Mennonite Church Canada.

Coordinator update

- The need of new churches building their first meetinghouse far exceeds the grants available.
- Men or women wishing to become part of Tenth Man are invited to donate $100 twice a year.
- Plans are to continue involvement with men's ministries ecumenically.
- Plan to attend the Mennonite Men banquet at Nashville 2001 Assembly, July 2-7. Sign up as part of conference registration. Learn more about Mennonite Men and its programs.
- For more information contact Mennonite Men (see address below).

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Yes, I would like to help new Mennonite churches!

☐ I want to give $100 when called upon, up to twice a year, to help new Mennonite churches buy or build their first permanent meetinghouse. I understand I will be contacted when my contribution is needed.

☐ Enclosed is my contribution of $______________

Name ____

Address ____

Phone ________________ Home congregation ____________________

Return this form to: Tenth Man, c/o Carl Thieszen, P.O. Box 61, North Newton, KS 67117 or Mennonite Church Canada, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4.

Need to expand services prompts credit unions in Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania to merge operations

LANCASTER, Pa.—Three credit unions serving Mennonites in Illinois, Ohio and Pennsylvania have merged to form a new organization with 6,000 members and $28.5 million in assets. Called Mennonite Financial, it received a federal charter effective Oct. 1 to serve Mennonites in all three states.

The new credit union joins Illinois Mennonite Federal Credit Union, headquartered in Evanston; Ohio Mennonite Federal Credit Union, headquartered in Kidron; and Pennsylvania Mennonite Federal Credit Union, headquartered in Lancaster. Mennonite Financial will operate offices in Lancaster and Kidron as well as in Scottdale, Pa., and Belleville, Pa., where Pennsylvania had offices. Plans call for an Ephrata, Pa., office to open in spring 2001.

The three credit union boards approved the merger in mid-August.

"Members of all three credit unions … wanted a full range of convenient financial services," says Larry Miller, Mennonite Financial president and formerly president of Pennsylvania. "Because we have a common bond of membership as Mennonites and because we have similar operating philosophies, coming together seemed a natural thing to do."

The Illinois and Ohio credit unions had limited services because of their smaller sizes. Illinois, with 215 members and $431,000 in assets, provided only savings accounts and some loans. Ohio, with 760 members and $3.7 million in assets, offered savings accounts, somes loans and checking accounts.

Pennsylvania had 5,000 members and $24 million in assets. Its services included savings accounts, checking accounts, certificates of deposit, money market accounts, individual retirement accounts, various loans, credit cards and ATM and Internet services. These and other services will be available to all Mennonite Financial members.

Miller called the merger a way of putting the Anabaptist principle of mutual aid into practice. "We care for each other not only as the credit union serves its members," he says. "But coming together in this way is also an example of mutual aid as credit unions help out each other."

The Pennsylvania credit union was started in 1955 to serve employees of Mennonite Publishing House in Scottdale. The credit union changed its charter in 1983 to serve all Mennonites in the state. Ohio was chartered in 1984 and Illinois in 1988.

The merger leaves Mennonite Financial and Park View Federal Credit Union, Harrisonburg, Va., as the only two Mennonite-associated credit unions in the United States. In the past, Colorado and Kansas have also had credit unions. Canada has one Mennonite credit union, based in Waterloo, Ont.

> **Coming together in this way is also an example of mutual aid as credit unions help out each other.**
>
> *—Larry Miller*

Goshen and Bethel join gun violence campaign

Goshen (Ind.) College students turned their campus into a cemetery on Oct. 2. Participating in a nationwide campaign against gun violence, students erected 80 tombstones to represent the 80 people who are killed by gun violence every day.

The campaign, called First Monday, included events at more than 300 other colleges in 41 states.

Goshen student organizers also held a silent vigil around the tombstones and collected signatures on petitions asking legislators to enact stricter gun-control laws.

Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., joined the campaign the next week with an Oct. 9 forum sponsored by the school's Peace Club. It included a panel discussion, presentations from local Democrat and Republican officials on their parties' platforms related to gun violence, and the county sheriff speaking on legal matters.

GCMC News Service

Pouring it on

Workers lay concrete for the new church building for Oraibi Mennonite Church, Kykotsmovi, Ariz. The congregation broke ground for their new meetinghouse on Aug. 27 and had a roof on it by the end of September.

Roundtable discussion

Christian Peacemaker Teams member Carmen Pauls (right) speaks with fellow CPT workers John Stoner and Elayne McClanen and Gen. Robert McIvany, commanding general of the U.S. Army War College, at the school's Carlisle, Pa., campus on Sept. 26. Six CPT workers met with five War College representatives to share contrasting notions of how peace is achieved. CPT has been holding monthly vigils at the entrance of the War College, which is the U.S. Army's highest institution where senior officers spend up to a year in strategic studies of military conflict.

CPT photo by H.A. Penner

Mennonite Women names new executive

NEWTON, Kan.—Rhoda Keener, a mental health worker and author from Shippensburg, Pa., has been named the new executive director of Mennonite Women. She will begin the full-time position on Oct. 23, working out of Shippensburg. She succeeds Lara Hall Blosser and Susan Jantzen, who shared leadership of the binational organization for three years.

Keener, a member of Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg, Pa., most recently was a mental health therapist in Shippensburg. She previously was on the staff of Oaklawn Psychiatric Center, Goshen, Ind., and at a shelter for battered women in Elkhart, Ind.

In addition to her master's degree in mental health counseling, Keener has a certificate in theology from Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart. She is co-editor, with Mary Lapp Swartley, of *She Has Done a Good Thing: Mennonite Women Leaders Tell Their Stories,* published last year by Herald Press.

"We're thrilled with the wealth of experience Rhoda brings to the position," says Mennonite Women board president Elizabeth Klassen of Kitchener, Ont. "Her strengths will come into play as she works with women in positions of leadership, enabling them to better support their groups."

Keener

Says Keener: "A vision that I have for Mennonite Women is one in which women can explore and use their gifts in all their diversity—in home and workplace, in missions and in the church, to name just a few. I believe Mennonite Women is a place of support, encouragement and validation for women in their many different walks of life and expressions of faith."—*GCMC News Service*

> Mennonite Women is a place of support, encouragement and validation for women.
>
> — *Rhoda Keener*

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Mennonite Church Canada, Tenth Man form partnership

WINNIPEG—Mennonite Church Canada has formed a joint ministries agreement with the Tenth Man Program of Mennonite Men, which has been a program of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

Tenth Man is a network of men and women who contribute $100 twice a year to a pool that provides grants for new congregations to build or buy their first meeting places. Under the agreement, Mennonite Church Canada contributions will receive priority for Canadian congregations, with a similar arrangement enacted for Mennonite Church USA. Funds may cross the border at the discretion of a binational committee.—*GCMC News Service*

Goshen honors alumni and students

GOSHEN, Ind.—Three Goshen (Ind.) College alumni were honored Oct. 6 for their commitment to lives of service. Rosemary Freening Harding, class of 1955; Florence I. Nafziger, class of 1945; and H. Royce Saltzman, class of 1950, received Culture for Service awards from the Goshen Alumni Board during the school's Alumni Weekend.

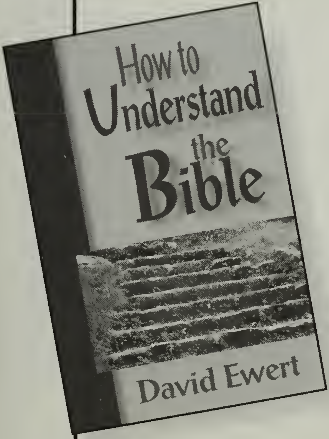
Harding, a lifelong peace and racial reconciliation advocate, is co-chair of the Gandhi-Hamer-King Center for the Study of Religion and Democratic Renewal at Iliff School of Theology in Denver. Harding and her husband, Vincent, became co-coordinators of Mennonite Central Committee's Mennonite House in Atlanta in 1961, leading to the creation of two interracial schools, monitoring desegregation of city schools and conducting workshops on nonviolence and reconciliation. Harding is a consultant for the Children's Defense Fund, the PBS series *Eyes on the Prize* and the American Friends Service Committee.

Nafziger was a longtime missionary nurse in India with Mennonite Board of Missions, starting in 1946 and serving until her retirement in 1984. She helped start a nursing school in Dhamtari, India, in 1950 and taught administration and education courses to graduate nurses for 12 years. Nafziger now lives in Goshen.

Saltzman, of Eugene, Ore., is an advocate of music as a way to build international understanding. He taught at the University of Oregon and helped form the International Federation for Choral Music, serving as president for nine years. He also helped found the Institute for Music Critics and the acclaimed Oregon Bach Festival. In 1994, the German government honored Saltzman with its highest honor, the Officer's Cross of the Order of Merit.

Also during the Oct. 6 ceremony, Goshen presented two seniors, Benjamin C. Hartman and Ezra Nugroho, with the first Barnabas Servant Leadership awards. Hartman, from Goshen, is currently volunteering in Comer, Ga., with Jubilee Partners, an organization that works with recent immigrants. Other involvements include Big Brothers/Big Sisters and the college's Pax Club.

Nugroho, from Semarang, Indonesia, is Goshen's Student Senate president and has served with the college's International Student Club and International Christian Student Fellowship.



Have you ever wondered if you understood certain passages in the Bible correctly? Have you puzzled over differing applications of the Bible in the church? David Ewert's *How to Understand the Bible* can help you avoid serious pitfalls in interpreting and applying the Bible.

From a lifetime of interpreting and proclaiming the Word of God, Ewert shares guidelines on studying the Scriptures. He explains literary forms, idioms, and figures of speech from ancient cultures so we can understand their meanings for today. With apt illustrations, Ewert deals with many typical questions. He encourages all who look to the Scriptures for light on their daily path, strength in times of need, and hope for the age to come.

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Paper, 240 pages, $14.99; in Canada $22.29

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by the way ...

In 1926, 21 of 132 General Conference Mennonite Church congregations had full-time pastors.—*The History of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America, Vol. II* by H.P. Krehbiel

Conrad Grebel student wins peace contest

AKRON, Pa.—Matthew Bailey-Dick, a May graduate of Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo, Ont., has taken first place in the 2000 C. Henry Smith Peace Oratorical Contest, administered by Peace and Justice Ministries of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) U.S.

Bailey-Dick's speech, "Running With a Vision: Healing, Not Hopping," called personal spirituality and public peacemaking the two equally important "legs" of a healthy Christian.

Goshen (Ind.) College student Deborah Scott was awarded second place for her speech, "A Vision for a Greener Campus." Ruth Harder of Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., was third with "Blessed Are the Policymakers."

The contest is open to students at Mennonite and Brethren in Christ colleges in North America. The top three speakers receive cash prizes and scholarships to attend a peace-related conference or seminar.

Each participating college hosts a contest among its students, then forwards the winning speech to MCC U.S. Peace and Justice Ministries for final judging.—*MCC News Service*

Project nearly doubles MCC center's size

EPHRATA, Pa.—More than 500 people attended the Sept. 23 dedication and open house of Mennonite Central Committee's (MCC) expanded Material Resources Center in Ephrata, Pa.

The year-long project increased the center's size from 15,000 square feet to 28,000 square feet. It cost $660,000, plus donated labor and materials. The building is a warehouse and assembly area for relief materials.

MCC has shipped record numbers of supplies in recent years. Prior to the Ephrata center's expansion, materials were stored in as many as 15 trailers at three locations.—*MCC News Service*

MCC photo by Corinna Kroeker

Building blocks

Three former street children in Ukraine display quilt blocks they created and that have been stitched into two quilts on display at Mennonite Central Committee relief sales across North America. The children live at the MCC-supported Shelter of the Good Shepherd in Makeevka.

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New CD with classic Mennonite a cappella music!

Good News! A Celebration of the Gospel commemorates the melodious men's quartets featured on the popular Mennonite Hour radio program of years past. This album marks the sixth in the varied collection of music digitally remastered from the original program tapes. CD $12.95 US / $19.95 CAD; Cassette $7.95 US / $11.95 CAD

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**Gift annuities are not available in California.*

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Workers

Bartow, David, has concluded as pastor at Upper Milford Mennonite Church, Zionsville, Pa. He is now associate chaplain at Frederick (Pa.) Mennonite Community.

Chupp, Ruben, has concluded as pastor at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland, Iowa. He is now senior pastor at North Main Street Mennonite Church, Nappanee, Ind.

Dyck, Arthur P., was licensed Aug. 27 as minister of music and worship at Neffsville Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Fry, Don, has begun as church planter pastor with Eden Mennonite Church, Schwenksville, Pa.

Hopson, Helen M., has concluded a chaplaincy at Philhaven Hospital, Mount Gretna, Pa.

Monte, Alfred J. Jr., was licensed Aug. 27 for lay ministry at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

Pipkin, Arlene S., was licensed Sept. 24 as pastor at Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship.

Rutherford, Richard E. Jr., was ordained Sept. 24 as pastor at Black Oak Mennonite Church, Warfordsburg, Pa.

Spallinger, Joe, was licensed Aug. 27 as pastor at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

Births

Enomoto, Kent Paul, Sept. 24, to Kaz and Lois Enomoto, Tokyo.

Fast, Katelyn Nichole, Sept. 19, to Jeffrey and Karen (Lee) Fast, Woodbury, Minn.

Jones, Matthew McCormick, Sept. 10, to Amy (Gustovich) and Matt Jones, Shipshewana, Ind.

Kanode, Nicholas Alexander, Sept. 21, to Hahns and Suzy (Brugger) Kanode, Weyers Cave, Va.

Laird, Amanda Grace, Sept. 23, to Kristen (Salisbury) and Tim Laird, Wadsworth, Ohio.

Nice, Garrett William, Sept. 28, to Dawn and Douglas Nice, Quakertown, Pa.

Nice, Justin Caleb, Sept. 19, to Kevin and Lisa Nice, Souderton, Pa.

Payne, Emma Rose, Sept. 21, to Pam (Stuckey) and Paul Payne, Hicksville, Ohio.

Weaver, Rachel Rempel, Sept. 17, to John and Marcia Rempel Weaver, Harrisonburg, Va.

Marriages

Benham/Deckert: Denise Haines Benham, Great Bend, Kan., and Warren Deckert, Pawnee Rock, Kan., Sept. 9 at Pawnee Rock State Park.

Brown/Short: Laura Brown, Tallapoosa, Ga., and Andrew Short, Atlanta, Aug. 6 at Friendship Baptist Church, Buchanan, Ga.

Charles/Stoltzfoos: Jill Charles, Leola, Pa., and Jeffrey Stoltzfoos, Willow Street, Pa., Sept. 17 at Lancaster, Pa.

Heinrich/Mast: Hans Christian Heinrich, Souderton, Pa., and Nichole Leanne Mast, Souderton, Sept. 16 at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton.

Metzler/Yoder: Ruth Ann Metzler, Belleville, Pa., and Roland Yoder, Belleville, Sept. 9 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Phares/Yoder: Dennis Phares, Hills, Iowa, and LaVerta Yoder, Kalona, Iowa, Sept. 17 at Kalona Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Albrecht, Katie Swartzendruber, 89, Pigeon, Mich., died Sept. 19. Spouse: Herbert Albrecht (deceased). Parents: George and Naomi Swartzendruber (deceased). Survivors: children Virgil, Carol Miller, Herbert; 17 grandchildren; 59 great-grandchildren; five great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 24 at Pigeon.

Benner, Ralph, 52, Penns Park, Pa., died Sept. 16. Spouse: Renee Anders Benner. Parents: Ralph and Mary Nice Benner (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 20 at Newtown, Pa.

Bigler, Mary Esther Miller, 94, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 11. Spouse: Claude Bigler (deceased). Parents: Abraham and Selina Wade Miller (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 15 at Prairie Street Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

Clemens, John, 94, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 10. Spouse: Sally Clemens. Parents: John and Hannah Clemens (deceased). Survivors: children Janet Thomas, Romaine Pannabecker; three grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 15 at Zion Mennonite Church, Souderton.

Eicher, Katherine Kauffman, 88, Burr Oak, Mich., died Sept. 14 of a heart attack. Spouse: Joe Eicher (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Lavina Kauffman (deceased). Survivors: children Earl, Ernest, Joan Eash, Esther Wolf; 22 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 16 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Burr Oak.

Fahndrich, Elizabeth Rediger, 97, Albany, Ore., died Sept. 16 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: John Fahndrich (deceased). Parents: David and Barbara Rediger (deceased). Survivors: children Dale, Muriel, Richard, Verdella Slagell; 10 grandchildren; 21 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 19 at Fairview Mennonite Church, Albany.

Friesen, Beverly Janzen, 65, Henderson, Neb., died Sept. 24 of cancer. Spouse: Myron Friesen. Parents: Herman and Eva Janzen (deceased). Other survivors: children Lori Jacobsen, Matt, Cal, Jim, Gayle Siebert; 13 grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 27 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Geisinger, Lawrence, 79, Smithville, Ohio, died Sept. 8. Spouse: Effie Yoder Geisinger. Parents: Vern and Mary Elnora Crosby Geisinger (deceased). Other survivors: children Calvin, Dean, Connie; two stepgrandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 11 at Smithville Mennonite Church.

Good, Lester, 86, Lititz, Pa., died Aug. 15. Spouse: Maggie Hershey Good. Parents: David and Alice Hollinger Good (deceased). Other survivors: children Alice Martin, Arthur, Miriam Musser, Herold, Ruth, Rhoda Kalend, Robert; 19 grandchildren; 34 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 18 at Landis Homes, Lititz.

Hartzler, Leroy, 90, Belleville, Pa., died Sept. 22. Spouse: Sadie Kauffman Hartzler (deceased). Parents: Thomas and Bertha Stoltzfus Hartzler (deceased). Survivors: children Lee, Kenneth, Kathy Chambers; eight grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 26 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Kauffman, Jean Zimmerman, 81, Belleville, Pa., died Sept. 19 of a stroke. Spouse: Ernest Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Harry and Clara Zimmerman (deceased). Survivors: children Beverly Peachey, Mrs. Robert Benn, Ernest Jr., Kenneth; 10 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 22 at Valley View Haven Chapel, Belleville.

Landis, Benjamin, 95, Lancaster, Pa., died Sept. 11. Spouse: Ella Landis (deceased) Funeral: Sept. 16 at Mellinger Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Nace, Vinnie, 98, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 14. Spouse: Lloyd Nace (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 16 at Souderton.

Schierling, John, 89, Inman, Kan., died Sept. 10. Spouse: Margaret Hahn (deceased). Survivors: children Kathryn Meyer, John, Doris Ridge; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 13 at Inman.

Sell, Sarah Nyce, 85, Souderton, Pa., died Aug. 28 of a stroke. Spouse: Nelson Sell (deceased). Parents: Henry and Sallie Nyce (deceased). Survivors: children Dennis, Kathleen Weihs, Christine Weihs, Sarah Tideman; 12 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 1 at Souderton.

Shantz, Wilfred, 85, New Hamburg, Ont., died Sept. 15 of cancer. Spouse: Selda Snyder Shantz. Parents: Mannasah and Louida Cressman Shantz (deceased). Other survivors: children Joyce, Tim, Dwight; five grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 18 at Shantz Mennonite Church, Baden, Ont.

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classifieds

- **Menno House**, a live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2001. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Friendship Community** has an opening for ***program coordinator and program supervisor***. This is an opportunity to impact a life and enrich your own. If you possess a college degree and at least 2 years of experience with people with mental retardation, please call Amy Horst, 717-656-2466, ext. 102.

- **Mennonite Central Committee** seeks a ***developer of policy and worker care systems***. MCC Human Resources wants to hire a full-time person to develop and revise policies and to improve systems for worker care. Contact your nearest MCC office for an application or a copy of the job description. Application review begins Oct. 30.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** seeks a full-time ***executive director***. Responsibilities include vision and passion for the ministry, leadership skills, interest and experience in development and spiritual maturity.

  Please send a letter of application and resume by Nov. 30, 2000, to Gloria Horst Rosenberger, Association President, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Rt. 5 Box 145, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666-8908. For more information on Laurelville: <www.laurelville.org>.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat**, a dynamic, multifaceted camp and retreat ministry affiliated with the Mennonite Church, seeks a ***business manager***—a mission-minded person with business/accounting experience and computer savvy. Responsibilities include accounting, financial reporting and forecasting, risk management and computer systems administration. Spruce Lake is located in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania and serves over 20,000 guests annually with a $2 million budget. Salary and liberal benefits package. On-camp housing available. Position open immediately.

  Send resume to Executive Director, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 800-822-7505; fax 570-595-0328; email <retreat@enter.net>.

- **Kings View Mental Health System** (KVMHS), a Mennonite-sponsored not-for-profit organization, seeks a visionary ***chief executive officer*** with strong financial acumen to lead its multisite organization in central California. Headquartered in Reedley, KVMHS provides a broad range of outpatient behavioral health services, social services and residential services for adolescents from 20 locations in a 10-county area. Minimum candidate requirements are: active Christian involved in local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, master's-level education, 8 years of senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills. Preferred candidates will have extensive health-care and multisite management experience.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants for a full-time, tenure track position in ***communication and theater*** beginning fall 2001. Doctorate in theater or communication preferred; ABD may be considered. Some college/university teaching experience preferred. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate courses in theater (acting, production, directing, oral interpretation), directing college theater productions, providing leadership toward the development of a major in theater and guiding the use of new theater resources on campus. Rank/salary commensurate with background and experience within the college pay scale. For more information see <www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs.employment.htm>. Review of applications begins Jan. 1, 2001, and continues until an appointment is made.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vita, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

Join us on the transformation journey…

I believe the work of God is of paramount importance and that the intentions behind integration are to further his work, therefore I excitedly anticipate its completion.

—Sheri Williams, Goshen, Ind.

The transformation project is reuniting members of the Mennonite family in a shared commitment through which the Holy Spirit is filling us with new energy and vision for mission here and around the world.

—Tom Lehman, Chapel Hill, N.C.

Help God's healing and hope flow through us to the world. The new Mennonite Church USA is raising $800,000 to help fund integration. We invite your financial support on Sunday, October 29—Transformation Sunday: Envisioning Healing & Hope.

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Sunday, October 29

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by Gordon Houser

We live in a world that generally assumes change for good comes through the use of violence. If you mention nonviolence as a viable option for change, you often hear the refrain, "That won't work against tyrants like Hitler." But it has. Many times.

A Force More Powerful is a 13-part documentary on the history of nonviolent resistance in the 20th century. In September, many PBS stations showed Parts I and II, which looked at six examples of nonviolent movements in the 20th century:

- the civil rights movement in the United States in the early 1960s;
- Gandhi's nonviolent campaign to free India from British rule, culminating in India's independence in 1948;
- resistance to apartheid in South Africa, which led to free elections in 1994;
- Denmark's noncooperation with Nazi occupation during World War II, which stifled Germany's production of war materials, saved thousands of Jewish lives and involved few deaths;
- the Solidarity movement of union workers in Poland in the late 1970s and 1980s, which led to free elections in 1989 and the overthrow of communist rule;
- Chile's nonviolent resistance to the bloody, dictatorial rule of Pinochet, who came to power with the aid of the CIA in a 1973 coup.

The documentary includes rarely seen footage of these events as they unfolded, plus interviews with some of the people involved, who look back on the experience and what they learned.

Except for the Danes, who acted "unwittingly," says narrator Ben Kingsley, these movements drew on the example of Gandhi, who was himself inspired largely by the New Testament, particularly Jesus' teachings in the Sermon on the Mount. An ecumenical Hindu, he once said that Christianity is a good idea that ought to be tried.

Although churches have often been on the side of oppressors or uninvolved, they played an important role in the American South, Poland, South Africa and Chile.

This documentary is informative and inspiring. If possible, obtain a copy for your church. Talk to your local high school or college history teachers about showing it in their classes. Contact your local PBS station to run it in full, then run it again. *A Force More Powerful* is a valuable tool for discussion.

An excellent resource to read with the film is *The Steps of Nonviolence* by Michael Nagler (Fellowship Publications, 1999, $4.50). This 36-page booklet includes stories of nonviolent action and outlines seven steps of nonviolence: (1) awakening nonviolent power, (2) knowing your conflict, (3) choosing clear goals, (4) using right means, (5) clinging to truth, (6) coping with success and (7) building peace.

Mennonites who believe in peace as Jesus' way of discipleship need not apologize for it. That way is a powerful force for justice.

art

Transitions: Selected Works 1965-2000 by Bob Regier, former professor of art at Bethel College, North Newton, Kan., is being shown until Nov. 5 at the Salina (Kan.) Art Center. His abstract color prints are nourished, Regier writes, "by community and place—the Plains environment. … the place that provides my bearings."

music

Let All Who Thirst: Hymns for Piano, performed by Lucia Unrau and arranged by Peter Terry (Faith & Life Press, 2000, $15.95 CD, $10.95 cassette), will disappoint those who want their hymns straight. But these adaptations offer creative approaches to familiar and newer songs that help strengthen our worship as we listen.

books

The Psalms: Prayers of Many Moods by Ronald Quillo (Paulist Press, 1999, $19.95) presents all 150 psalms, each accompanied by comments on the right-hand side of the page, with room for readers to record their own reactions. The author adds with each psalm an oppressive thought and image and an edifying thought and image, plus a prayer. Quillo divides the Psalms into four categories—worship, joy, sorrow, serenity—and includes the sequence of Psalms for the liturgy of the hours. This is a good resource for using the Psalms for personal prayer and meditation.

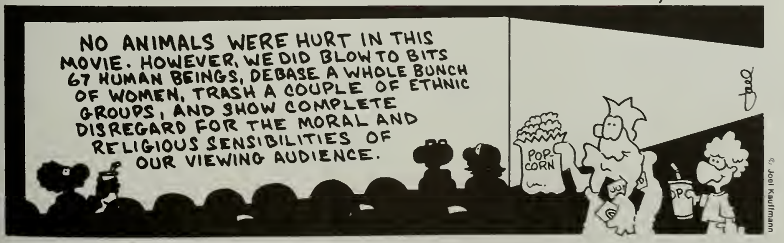
videos

In *After Life* (PG), a Japanese film, people who die are given three days to choose a moment from their lives they want to live in forever. I found myself reflecting on joyful moments of my life, but the film bogged down in the end.

The Big Kahuna (R) is almost a filmed play, with three salesmen talking about making a deal. The title refers to the important client, to meaning, to God. If you can get past the language, you'll find some nuggets of wisdom and some fine acting.

Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann


NO ANIMALS WERE HURT IN THIS MOVIE. HOWEVER, WE DID BLOW TO BITS 67 HUMAN BEINGS, DEBASE A WHOLE BUNCH OF WOMEN, TRASH A COUPLE OF ETHNIC GROUPS, AND SHOW COMPLETE DISREGARD FOR THE MORAL AND RELIGIOUS SENSIBILITIES OF OUR VIEWING AUDIENCE.
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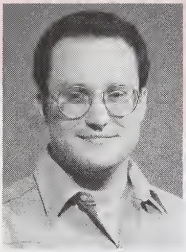

Rich Preheim

The General and the pacifist

With 763 wins, 11 conference championships and three national titles, Bob Knight has long been heralded as one of the most successful coaches in college basketball history. For now, however, he may be best known as the most reviled man in America.

During his 29 years as head coach of the men's basketball team at Indiana University, Knight had plenty of experience in withstanding criticism, repeatedly drawing fire for what he said and did. Nicknamed "the General" for his authoritarian, disciplinarian style, Knight also had a penchant for losing his temper. He liberally berated players, referees, sportswriters and university officials. He kicked a player—his son—during a game. He allegedly slugged an assistant coach. He threw a chair across the court during a game.

But that was all prelude to what has happened since this past spring. That's when a videotape surfaced showing Knight putting his hands around the throat of a player during a practice. A subsequent investigation by the university turned up a long pattern of verbal and physical abuse of players and even school employees. Indiana, in effect, placed Knight on probation. A well-publicized run-in with an Indiana student last month forced the school to give the General a dishonorable discharge.

Christians offer themselves in friendship as witnesses to—not preachers of—the One who was the supreme example in life and death.

It would seem that Knight is an out-of-control control freak. Certainly the uproar from both sports and nonsports critics would support that.

Yet it also appears that Knight indeed can be a nice fellow. His friends say he is loyal, generous, sincere, gracious, respectful.

Bill Detweiler is one of those friends.

While Knight has earned a reputation for both his basketball titles and his tirades, Detweiler has become well-known as a Mennonite preacher, continuing to broadcast *The Calvary Hour,* the pioneer radio program started by his father, William, in 1936.

Detweiler's friendship with Knight goes back to when he was living in Orrville, Ohio, when the General was growing up there. In recent years, Detweiler, who now lives in Kidron, Ohio, and Knight have exchanged letters, and the preacher had been going to a couple of the coach's games a season.

It seems like one of the oddest of all possible odd couples: the chair-throwing, epithet-spouting nonbeliever and the Scripture-citing Mennonite pacifist. Yet Detweiler, while not condoning all his friend does, says he doesn't preach to Knight. That is out of bounds.

Christians' relationships with non-Christians have forever been one of religion's most volatile issues. But as we are called to make disciples and to not be unequally yoked, it is important to note that there is a difference between winning other people to Christ and being as Christ to other people.

Evangelism is a biblical mandate, but it is a one-way street of seeking to make converts. Friendship, meanwhile, is a two-way street, with each friend providing to the other the love, support and encouragement that all of us need. Non-Christians are perfectly capable of providing that, as Knight shows in his relationship with Detweiler. And Christians offer themselves in friendship as witnesses to—not preachers of—the One who was the supreme example in life and death.

In short, we can love because Christ first loved us—unconditionally. It's a love that has no expectations but is patient, kind and trusting, not proud or self-serving (1 Corinthians 13:4-6). Such love, we pray, may help show non-Christians the way to Christ. But conversion cannot be the goal of friendship, because friendship has no goals.

Friendships with non-Christians can also help us not fall into the trap of judging others. It certainly would be easy to condemn Bob Knight. And while he needs to be held accountable for his actions, Detweiler and others can attest that he is not the ogre that public opinion makes him out to be. By knowing people that are unlike us, we can move beyond stereotypes and misperceptions based on incomplete knowledge.

That's all part of the game plan of being a Christian.—*rp*

the Mennonite

October 24, 2000

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Sociology of schism

A year or two ago, I wrote that as integration proceeds, there would be individual congregations and groups of congregations splitting off. That is now happening. First there was the Association of Mennonite Evangelical Churches. Now comes the Association of Evangelical Mennonite Churches. While neither group claims to be leaving at this time, they are keeping the option open. But the Hopewell District of Atlantic Coast Conference is withdrawing, and the Cornerstone District of Virginia Conference is expected to withdraw.

This is typical of Mennonites. There are always individuals and congregations who develop a belief system of essentials they believe is superior to that of the main body of believers. Now and then they express their dissatisfaction but usually stay with the main body. Occasionally a person or congregation leaves. But when a major change takes place, such as is happening with integration and the new confession of faith, this becomes the "reason" to leave in large numbers.

Mennonites in southeastern Pennsylvania are provincial, divisive and schismatic. For the past 300 years, there has been schism after schism out here. Whole groups have gone their separate ways. Some still bear the name Mennonite. Others do not, and unless one knows the history, a person would have no way of knowing they were once Mennonite. Individual congregations have broken away, and on occasion, a pastor has taken a group out of the congregation he was serving and begun his own church.

It would be an interesting study for someone to investigate the factors behind all these schisms and divisions and write a history of southeastern Pennsylvania Mennonites from a sociological perspective. It would be good to get beyond the pious words of those who have left and are leaving to see what are the sociological and pyschological factors behind their leaving.—*Lamont A. Woelk, Richlandtown, Pa.*

In search of greater knowledge

The words of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 13:12 have something to say to us about the proposal for membership guidelines for Mennonite Church USA. Paul writes: "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known."

We do have some knowledge about God's will concerning issues related to homosexuality and church membership. However, our knowledge is only partial. We come to greater knowledge when we dialogue with Christian brothers and sisters who hold different perspectives from us.

Therefore, it is critically important to include in the membership guidelines an explicit statement calling for dialogue on these issues. The committee that formulated the current proposal wisely included the following statement: "We hold the Saskatoon and Purdue statements [on sexuality] calling for the church to be in dialogue with those who hold differing views to be the teaching position of the Mennonite Church USA."

If we want to heed the teachings of the apostle Paul, then we will affirm the statement in the membership guidelines calling for dialogue. To ignore the biblical teaching about our limited human knowledge would be a serious mistake.—*Brent A. Koehn, South Bend, Ind.*

Solid amid the stress

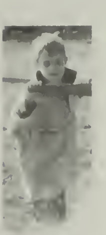
It has been said that to be strong, the church must shift and bend, not crack and fall, like the Empire State Building, which sways several inches at the top in the midst of stress and strain but is founded upon solid rock.—*A. Don Augsburger, Lancaster, Pa.*

Pontius' Puddle
by Joel Kauffmann
EVER SINCE WE BEGAN OFFERING FRESH DONUTS BEFORE SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES, OUR CONGREGATION HAS REALLY EXPANDED!
REALLY? BY HOW MUCH?
ABOUT 27 POUNDS PER MEMBER.
© Joel Kauffmann

Cover photo
by Debra Turnrose

the Mennonite

Vol. 3, No. 40, October 24, 2000



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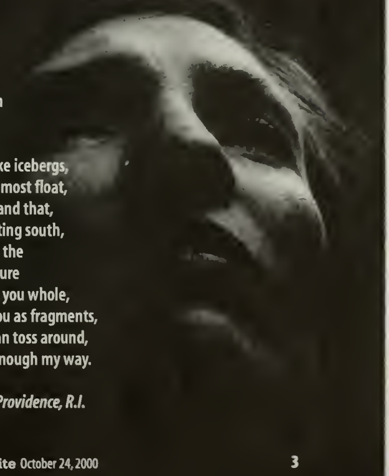
Bedside

by John Grey



Unpredictable as the
movement of leaves,
the behavior of black bears,
so go the invisible
currents of your body.
You sputter like
a campfire in the dark
or grind your teeth so loud,
I fear the earth is breaking,
or you sleep twelve hours
at a time,
worn down by your former beauty
or the creatures you once weaned
who breed beneath you,
behind your back.
We lose you
and we lose ourselves,
an unremembered name
setting so much in motion,
identity less tangible,
shadows folding like
beds into tables.
Each moment must exert its friction.
It can live without form
but must not lose a drop of substance.
But as it moves mysteriously
this way or that,
how can we know
how much of it is
places where you once lived,
how much of it
that unforced turn
toward the light.
Joints withered,
bones loosened like icebergs,
your body parts almost float,
slipping this way and that,
sometimes migrating south,
others, flying into the
headwind of a future
that doesn't want you whole,
will only accept you as fragments,
as something it can toss around,
and I pray, blow enough my way.

John Grey lives in Providence, R.I.

Healthy ways to say goodby

We need to grieve our losses in order to move on.

by Dennis Koehn

During the last 16 years I have worked as a mediator and consultant in several dozen Mennonite congregations. In the early years I expected to resolve all the issues and restore the fellowship of everyone in the congregations I served. But this was not my experience. In every case of intense conflict, someone left. The most severe cases were two congregations that split—about 50-50.

I saw that individuals and congregations needed healthy ways to separate. About this time Anne, my wife, and I took a seminary course on counseling couples and families. I learned that we all have to say goodbye to some extent to our family of origin in order to become mature and responsible adults. Could wisdom about healthy family separations be applied to congregations?

Let us all embrace the hard and essential work of grieving losses as we prepare for the new work and the new community to which God is calling us.

Ways to say goodbye: The study of family systems points to important aspects of the individuation and separation process. What is your style of saying goodbye to a situation or a relationship? Think about the following aspects of feelings and behavior when saying goodbye:

- Did you move slowly or quickly?
- Was there a lot of sharing or was there mostly silence?
- Were the parting feelings warm or angry?
- Were the parties flexible or rigid, open or closed?
- Were the relationships characterized by trust or mistrust?
- Was there evidence of respect or a stance of criticism?

Generally the first option in each of these questions is healthiest and leaves the parties with positive energy and anticipation for future relationships. It is good when saying goodbye to move slowly, include a lot of sharing and work for warmth, flexibility, openness, trust and respect. If we leave a situation in silence and feeling angry, rigid, closed, mistrustful and critical, we carry with us a heavy emotional load of unprocessed feelings. These unresolved feelings can lead to emotional isolation, depression and increased vulnerability to cancer, heart disease, digestive problems and nervous tension.

I have found that feeling a maximum sense of completion in one situation or relationship frees us to move into new situations with energy and positive anticipation. Most of us face many transitions and separations in our lives. Besides church membership changes, we live in a highly mobile society in which people often make geographic, relationship and career changes. We need to be aware of how we navigate these transitions.

Helpful tips: Here are some helpful tips on how to say goodbye in ways that promote health and growth.

- Pray with and for the people from whom you are separating. Ask God's grace and blessing on them.
- Assert some control in the situation; don't feel like a passive victim. Take the risk of speaking up even if you feel that you will not be understood completely.
- Meet with others on equal terms; enter into real dialogue. Converse in depth with others about your actual experience. Be vulnerable and talk about what you experienced and how it felt.
- Be straight and clear about reasons for leaving. Yes, the truth will set us free. Honesty tempered with compassion is miraculously healing and liberating.
- Face your experiences and feelings realistically. Let go of old grudges by sharing feelings directly with those involved. Accept the good and the bad. Say thank you for the people and things you appreciated. Tough situations are often our most instructive teachers. We can learn much about grace, humility and forgiveness in the midst of pain and suffering.
- Get your affairs in order: Resign from positions, finish projects, organize information, pass records and documents to others.

Stages of grief: Saying goodbye always involves loss. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, in her book *On Death and Dying*, identified the stages of grief we go through when dealing with a significant loss: denial and isolation, anger and criticism, bargaining, depression, acceptance. Signs of maturity are to recognize our losses and honor these healthy emotional stages in the grief process. If I do not recognize my internal grief process, I am likely to blame people around me for my loneliness, anger and depression. Projection of internal emotional agenda onto others puts great stress on relationships.

Personal experiences: I remember when I transferred membership from my home congregation in Kansas to the congregation I now attend in Indiana. It took me three years to transfer membership, let go of old relationships and embrace the new. I was leaving those who had nurtured me through the formative years of my life. I was affiliating with a new body that had different traditions and expectations.

I remember saying goodbye to freedom and independence when I got married. Actually I was in shock for about three years. I was shocked to experience the loss of singleness even as I embraced the richness of marriage. Saying goodbye and saying hello were surprisingly inseparable.

I remember leaving a stressful job after six months of memos and meetings to try to iron out areas of tension. Three years later I developed an exercise for a consulting client to work on closure with an organization he was leaving. My wife suggested that I run myself through the exercise. I wrote responses to several pages of questions. Then we spent several evenings talking through my experiences and feelings. It was a healing process. I could feel the tension leaving my body as I wrote, then later as we talked.

Life experience has taught me that a period of three years is often needed to make transitions and work through the grief process. Three years of prayerful, self-conscious effort yield readiness for new joy and connection.

Mennonite transformation: During these years of integration and transformation many of us will experience significant losses. Those of us who stay in Mennonite Church USA will lose some of our familiar relationships, programs and institutions. Those Mennonites who choose not to be in this emerging denomination will also lose familiar connections. Let us all embrace the hard and essential work of grieving these losses as we prepare for the new work and the new community to which God is calling us. May God's healing and hope touch us, then flow through us to the world.

Dennis Koehn lives in Goshen, Ind.

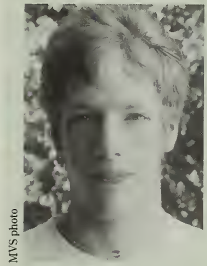
A voice for the voiceless

From Germany to Topeka, Kan., in voluntary service

by Markus Weyel

I have to start my story with a confession: I am not a Mennonite, at least not a "real" one. I was born and raised in a small town in Germany, about 60 miles northwest of Frankfurt. Like most of the rest of the population of my hometown, I attended an Evangelical Free church. When I turned 18, I had to start thinking about what I would do after graduating from high school. Like all other young men in Germany, I had to choose between 10 months of military service or 13 months of alternative service. According to my conscience, my faith and political beliefs, serving in the military was not an option for me. I had to decide what to do as alternative service. I found out I could do this alternative service in a foreign country. I contacted several organizations, and the one that matched best with what I was interested in was called Christliche Dienste (Christian Services) and happened to work with Mennonite Voluntary Service. I asked my pastor if there was anything wrong with Mennonites, since I'd never heard much about them but that they drive buggies and wear suspenders (at least the men). He told me Mennonites are a peace church. I liked that and I applied for a position. It took over a year before I knew I would be going to Albany, Ore.

On Aug. 27, 1999, I left my family and friends at the airport in Frankfurt to go to Albany, where I would be part of the Service Adventure program. I lived with five other people, worked as a teacher's assistant and German teacher at a middle school during the day and fought crime dressed up as a bat at night (just kidding). I worked at the local Boys and Girls Club in the afternoon. I also learned that my pastor hadn't told me the full truth about Mennonites, that they are all related and have only five different last names. It was a great experience, the best 10 months of my life (so far at least).



MVS photo

A Mennonite: Markus Weyel

After my Service Adventure term ended, I wanted to work with Mennonite Voluntary Service in peace and justice. On July 1 I left Oregon for Topeka, Kan., where I work at the Topeka Center for Peace and Justice.

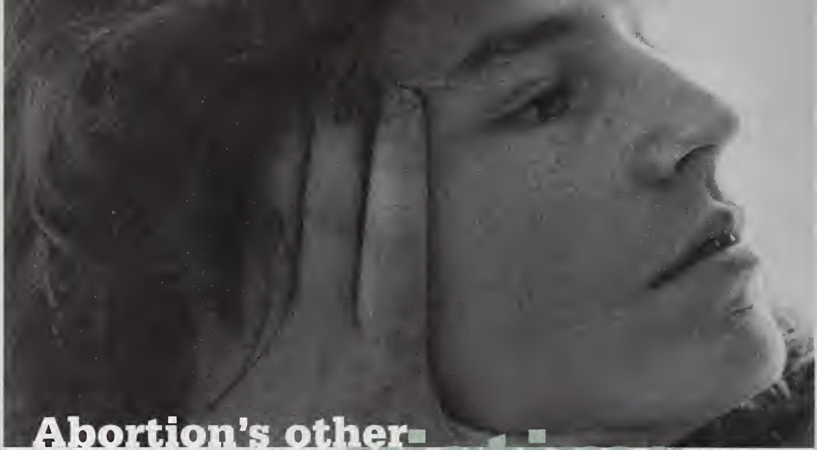
One of my housemates in Service Adventure, Kristin Buller from Goshen, Ind., introduced me to the School of the Americas, Fort Benning, Ga. She had been to the November protests there in 1997 and 1998. I decided to go to this year's protest Nov. 17-19. I figured I might as well try to educate people in Topeka on the issue and see if others from the area wanted to go to Georgia with me. After contacting the SOA Watch office in Washington, which coordinates SOA protests, I received a phone call from the director, Jeff Winder, who told me about a weekend of leadership development that they were going to have at Loyola University in Chicago Aug. 4-6 and if I would be interested in attending, since nobody else from Kansas was going to be there.

Most probably know that in voluntary service you don't have much money, but blessed are those who have a supporting church family, which I do. Southern Hills Mennonite Church helped me raise enough money to go. The meeting in Chicago inspired me to start SOA Watch Kansas to organize people to go to Fort Benning in November. Most of all I want to educate people about the School of the Americas and how the people in Latin America directly suffer from this school. I want to be a voice for those who cannot raise their voice against injustice or who are tortured and killed. "The voice of the voiceless" is my motto.

I work with peace groups, churches, schools and individuals throughout Kansas, making presentations and holding meetings and nonviolence training in order to educate and prepare people for the nonviolent action at the SOA in November. I enjoy the work and think it is the right thing to do. I even feel I am a Mennonite by now and I'm considering changing my last name to Miller or Yoder.

I want to challenge members of the Mennonite church, which calls itself a peace church and talks a lot about peace and justice, to get involved in the movement to close down the SOA, to speak out against violence and practice active nonviolence and Christian love.

Markus Weyel is a Mennonite Voluntary Service worker in Topeka, Kan.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Abortion's other victims

A pregnancy crisis center director reflects on the experiences of people who have had abortions.

by Ruth Thiessen

Based on my observation, nobody gains when an abortion is performed. Most women who have abortions are left with a lifetime of regret, guilt and shame of varying degrees.

To gain greater understanding of post-abortion trauma and to learn how to help those who have made this decision, journey with me behind abortion's well-guarded veil of secrecy.

Pam Koerbel, a writer and co-founder of Post Abortion Ministries, describes her abortion experience, even years after the fact, like this: "I cried even after so many years … because abortion will always be an emotional subject to me. I cried for the past that he never had, the future that he never knew and the present that I cannot share with him.

"I cried for myself because I had made a terrible mistake. I say mistake because I never realized the enormity of what I was doing until afterward—and then it was too late. I cried because through my own selfishness and confusion, I denied myself an unsurpassed joy and I denied my son the life God intended."

If this is the reality of abortion, why would so many make this choice? Here are several reasons, according to our clients: I am much too young to be a mother or father; this baby will destroy my whole life; my mom said if I ever came home pregnant she'd kick me out of the house; my boyfriend says he'll leave me if I don't get rid of this baby; it will destroy my parents' good reputation (they have a high profile in our church); these things just should not happen in our family; if I don't get rid of the baby, people will know we had an extramarital affair.

Many men and women panic when they find out that their indulgence in premarital or extramarital sex has resulted in pregnancy.

Many men and women panic when they find out that their indulgence in premarital or extramarital sex has resulted in pregnancy. This was true for a couple we helped by working through their post-abortion experience. They had both been in their teens and felt unprepared to parent. Their parents were dedicated Christians and would be devastated by the news.

In their moment of crisis they turned to someone who believed an abortion could solve their problems. Despite their apprehension and doubts even as they sat in the abortion clinic, they followed this advice to avoid what they perceived as insurmountable circumstances. Little did they know that what was to follow would be much more difficult than carrying the baby to term.

Let's look at post-abortion experience. Here are the stages these people walk through and some of the issues they have to deal with.

Relief, denial and coming to terms: Most people who have chosen an abortion go through three stages. The first is relief. Most have passed through a time of inner turmoil, asking whether or not to abort the baby. Now the decision has been made, the abortion has been done and there is a sense that the crisis has passed. There will be no missing school or work, no need to disclose the pregnancy, no lifelong responsibilities to raise this child and, best of all, no one will ever need to know.

This stage lasts minutes, hours, days or sometimes years. Ingrid Krueger, a pro-life advocate, said hers lasted mere minutes. The tears of regret had already begun to flow on her way back from an abortion clinic. For another it lasted until she gave birth to her son. Then the reality of what she had done to her first child overwhelmed her.

The second stage is denial. For many it is much too painful to face the reality of their choice, so they go into denial and rationalization simply to cope with life. They may rationalize, but their inner reflections are more involved: "I have no problems from the abortion, but in reality I cry when I am by myself and I won't tell anyone the truth of what I did."

"I'm doing fine, but in reality I've lost my feelings, I've lost my church, I've lost relationships, my self-respect and respect for life."

"Oh, it was just a fetus, but deep down I know it was a baby; in fact, my baby's heart was already beating."

This stage usually lasts six to eight years. During this time they struggle to suppress the thoughts or emotions about the abortion, and this continual suppression can lead to harmful coping methods. This may involve deadening one's emotions. It is easier not to feel than to feel such pain.

Some lie about the abortion, others resort to drugs and alcohol. Some choose busyness —if I do enough good, I can repay the wrong I did. Others avoid movies or TV shows that address abortion. Some even avoid the baby section in stores. Many are unaware they have chosen these behaviors in response to coping with their abortion.

The third stage is coming to terms with their choice. This is the stage where they stop rationalizing and say, "Yes, I could have made a different decision. I should have made a different decision for my baby, but I did not. I am responsible."

One client put it this way: "I had an abortion eight years ago. I am so tired of the secrecy in my life. I am tired of crying myself to sleep at night. I am tired of the guilt, the shame, the interference it has caused in my parenting." Many times she had begged God to forgive her. She knew God had, but there were still so many unresolved issues.

Fear, anxiety, anger and guilt: Here are some of the issues most who have chosen an abortion face. One is fear. Women fear that if they disclose their secret, the person they tell may not understand or may reject them. They fear that more guilt will be heaped on them, and many have already struggled with so much guilt. Most fear God will punish them.

Anxiety is another common problem. Most seem generally anxious about life. Many are afraid to make decisions because they failed so miserably in making one of life's most important decisions. How can they ever trust themselves again?

Probably the most intense response we see is anger. They are angry that society presents abortion as an easy, painless solution to ending an unplanned pregnancy yet fails to inform them of fetal development and the realities of post-abortion trauma.

They may be angry at the medical profession for performing abortions, at the government for legalizing it, at friends for presenting it as the best option, at boyfriends who enjoy sex yet abandon them when a pregnancy occurs, at parents for being unwilling to accept a pregnancy outside marriage and at God for not stopping them. However, most of the anger is self-directed for lacking the courage to do the right thing.

Another issue is guilt. Someone who has chosen to walk alongside a person who has had an abortion may find the degree of guilt these people carry overwhelming. "How could I have been so focused on my own fears and concerns that I thought destroying my unborn baby was the answer to my problems?" Even worse is the reality that no matter how much they regret this choice, there is no going back.

How can we help their healing? These are just a few of the issues men and women who have made this choice will probably face. Knowing this, how can we as family, friends and church members come alongside these individuals and help them on their journey to healing?

Having worked for several years with people experiencing post-abortion trauma, I believe the importance of extending love, forgiveness and compassion cannot be overemphasized.

Having worked for several years with people experiencing post-abortion trauma, I believe the importance of extending love, forgiveness and compassion cannot be overemphasized.

Jesus did not categorize which sins God would or would not forgive. According to 1 John 1:9, God forgives all sins confessed, and so must we. It is also important that we remain sensitive to what stage people are at in their healing journey. If they are in stages one and two, they may not be ready to address these issues and may even deny their existence. We need to respect that and remain patient.

One avenue of help, no matter where they are on the journey, is prayer. Pray that they realize God loves them in spite of their choice. God wants to forgive them. God desires that they forgive themselves and again experience peace and joy.

Caring for these people and walking alongside them is important, but respect the fact that you may not be the person to whom they wish to disclose such personal matters. Let them choose who they will open up to, or suggest a pregnancy crisis center in your area where they might feel more comfortable talking about such issues.

In working with clients in their post-abortion trauma, we let them express openly their love for their baby. We encourage them to name their baby so that the baby no longer has only the status of a fetus. It is important for them to see their baby as a person God was designing. Some people choose to write a letter to their baby.

One of the more difficult issues of abortion is that there is no formal beginning or end to their baby's life. To help in bringing closure, we suggest a memorial service or anything else they may find meaningful in marking the end of this brief life.

Ruth Thiessen is director of Grace Haven Pregnancy Crisis Centre in Steinbach, Man. This article is reprinted from The Messenger, *April 19, 2000.*

Violence disrupts life, work in Holy Land

Mennonite workers maintaining presence amid conflict

The continuing clashes between Palestinians and Israelis have kept 22 people from visiting the Holy Land but are expected to hasten the early arrival of another person into that conflicted area.

A Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) choir of 22 North Americans on a Middle East tour opted to remain in Jordan for the remainder of their 19-day tour instead of going to Palestine and the West Bank. The choir, which was scheduled to return to the United States on Oct. 20, had been in Syria at the invitation of the Middle East Council of Churches to help celebrate two millennia of Christianity.

The choir members, from five states and three provincies, have not been in any danger, says Ron Braun, director of the MCC Central States regional office, which organized the tour. "They feel relatively safe [in Jordan], safe enough to go out as tourists," he says.

Meanwhile, doctors were expected on Oct. 18 to induce labor on a pregnant locally hired staff member of the MCC West Bank office due to overcrowded hospitals and the potential of travel restrictions. "They are going to induce the baby so they can control the time," says Rick Janzen, MCC's co-director of Middle East programs.

MCC has five expatriate workers plus four children in the region. "They are all doing remarkably well," Janzen says.

One family, James and LeAnn Friesen and their two children, left their MCC assignment in Gaza and spent several days in Jerusalem, Janzen says. They have since returned to Gaza, which has been a flashpoint of hostilities. The Friesens started their assignment only two months ago.

Another flashpoint has been Hebron, where Christian Peacemaker Teams has maintained a presence for several years. Israeli artillery targeted a site about 150 yards from the apartment of the six CPT workers. Two more sites of clashes between Palestinians and Israelis are within several hundred yards of the apartment.

"The team most of the time ... was walking the streets, trying to talk to soldiers, encouraging them to be less heavy-handed," says CPT director Gene Stoltzfus.

He says the CPT workers have also been distributing bread to local Palestinians, whose travel has been restricted.

Travel has also been restricted in Bethlehem, where MCC worker Ed Nyce is based. Even though some movement is now allowed, he has no plans to leave, Janzen says. "He felt that this was the place to be," he says.

Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) has two families in the region. D. Michael and Virginia Hostetler and their two children are in Nazareth. "They would have been advised to stay clear of the downtown area, where a lot of the stone-throwing and looting has happened," says John F. Lapp, MBM's administrator for the Middle East.

MBM's other workers, Gary and Ruth Denlinger and their daughter, are in Haifa, in northern Israel, largely removed from the violence.

The other MCC expatriates are West Bank country representatives Sonia and Alain Epp Weaver in East Jerusalem. They are about 10 minutes from the Damascus Gate, which has been a scene of fighting.

MCC has already provided $20,000 for medical supplies, and proposals for more assistance are being considered, Janzen says.—*Rich Preheim*

They are all doing remarkably well.

—Rick Janzen

Hop to it

Bethel College students (left to right) Clark Oswald, sophomore from Kalona, Iowa; C.J. Friesen, junior from Goshen, Ind.; and James Regier, sophomore from Haven, Kan., participate in the feed-sack race, one of the student competitions held Oct. 6 during Bethel's annual Fall Festival weekend. The weekend also featured the launch of the public phase of a $19 million capital campaign, dedication of a new residence hall, class reunions, sports events and the Fall Fest drama.

Vada Snider

The Marketplace

Workers sort beans for quality at a warehouse of ASOPROF, the Bolivian bean producers association. Mennonite Economic Development Associates introduced beans to the country in 1986, then later spearheaded the creation of ASOPROF, which brought in a rigid classification system, enabling local beans to meet stiff export standards. Bolivian beans are now marketed in Brazil, Colombia and Japan.

30 years of work in Bolivia produces successes, shortcomings for MEDA, evaluation team discovers

When Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) introduced edible beans to Bolivia in 1986, expectations were high.

Back then farmers didn't grow them, and people didn't eat them. But MEDA thought beans could provide farmers with added income because they could be grown between the traditional crops of corn and dryland rice. The beans would provide added nourishment for people and boost nutrients in the soil.

Today, thanks to MEDA, bean consumption in the bean-growing area of Bolivia is 66 pounds per person—at least one-fourth of daily protein requirements. Farmers have seen their incomes double and triple, and beans are exported to Brazil, Colombia and Japan. MEDA also spearheaded the creation of ASOPROF, the national bean producers association.

"Since we've been planting beans, our economic situation has improved considerably," says Gregorio Rengifo, a farmer near Santa Cruz. "Last year, my profits enabled me to buy a tractor."

And that is the downside. With their increased income from beans, farmers are switching from animals to tractors to till their soil. But tractors contribute to soil compaction, which occurs when land is worked when it is too wet. Ground that is too wet cannot be tilled with animals.

That was one of the environmental effects that prompted a five-member MEDA evaluation team to conclude that bean production has "not been clearly positive." Among the team's other findings were that planting beans has not improved soil fertility as expected.

The team went to Bolivia earlier this year to assess MEDA's work since the organization entered the country in 1970. Bolivia is now MEDA's longest continuous field of activity.

MEDA went into Bolivia to help Mennonite Central Committee with agriculture work. Agricultural initiatives have been central to MEDA's efforts, helping establish cooperatives and marketing companies.

One spin-off benefit, the evaluators noted, was education. The emphasis MEDA placed on adult training convinced parents that education was important for their children. Increased farm prosperity made it possible for children to attend school.

In 1989, MEDA branched out by starting PRISMA, a microenterprise program providing credit, training and technical assistance to small business operators. PRISMA became independent of MEDA in 1997.

During PRISMA's eight years as a MEDA program, 11,000 people received loans and 7,000 received training. On average, clients saw their assets increase 30 percent to 40 percent and their income increase 20 percent. Employees of PRISMA clients saw their average salaries rise 43 percent.

The evaluation team called PRISMA "a success in that it improved the situation of low-income individuals and their communities, strengthened counterpart institutions and contributed to the development of the microfinance sector in Bolivia."

The team gave MEDA lukewarm marks on the matter of gender equality, saying the organization's "impact has been negligible in the realm of gender." The team says MEDA is in a learning process and that the board recently adopted a gender equality policy. But MEDA was also slow to adopt contemporary gender theory and was not at the forefront of encouraging gender awareness among its cooperating partners.—*The Marketplace*

Bicycle tour riders meet 20 years later

Like the wheels on their bicycles, the stories circulated last month during a 20th-anniversary reunion of participants in an Out-Spokin' cross-country tour.

In Idaho, there was the choking dust from Mount St. Helens. In Montana, there was the stomach flu. South Dakota was remembered for its fierce crosswinds. And New Hampshire presented the difficulties of going through the White Mountains.

Twenty-nine people went on that 7½-week ride in 1980, sponsored by Out-Spokin', which was a Mennonite Board of Missions bicycling ministry from 1969 to 1982. Eighteen of the participants gathered Sept. 23 in Elkhart, Ind., to reminisce and renew relationships.

Helen Stoltzfus Bowman, an Out-Spokin' staff member on the trip, said the adventures were more than just thunderstorms and bad water. "Biking was the easy part," she said. "Relationships were the difficult part."

The reunion included a slide show of the trip, sharing updates from the last 20 years and a memorial service for two trip participants who have since died.—*MBM News Service*

New program grants scholarships to four Ukrainians to study Mennonites in czarist Russia, Soviet Union

DNEPROPETROVSK, Ukraine—Four Ukrainian scholars have received the first scholarships under a new North American-sponsored program to encourage research of Mennonites in czarist Russia and the Soviet Union.

The program is a joint venture of Mennonite Central Committee; Anabaptist Foundation, Vancouver; Research Program in Russian Mennonite History, University of Toronto; Mennonite Heritage Centre, Winnipeg; Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Fresno, Calif.; and the California Mennonite Historical Society.

The awards were made in a ceremony last month in the city of Dnepropetrovsk. Mennonite Studies Grants for Research and Publication in the Commonwealth of Independent States were given to Ury Beresten, a graduate student at Dnepropetrovsk State University; Marian Romanyuk, a graduate student at Zaporozhzhia State University; and Nicholas Krylov, professor at the Pedagogical University of Melitopol. Natasha Ostawheva, professor at Dnepropetrovsk State University, received the George K. Epp Doctoral Research Grant.

Historical studies of the Mennonites in the region had been constrained during the Soviet era. Since the fall of communism, however, interest has increased in Mennonite contributions in Ukraine.

In her introductory remarks at the ceremony, Svetlana Dobyleva, director of a Ukrainian-German institute at Dnepropetrovsk State University, reflected on the connections between the Mennonite and Ukrainian people. For example, Mennonite Johann Esau was mayor of Dnepropetrovsk, then known as Ekaterinoslav, from 1901 to 1909. During that time he inaugurated a public transportation system and helped establish the university.

Growing churches to tell their stories

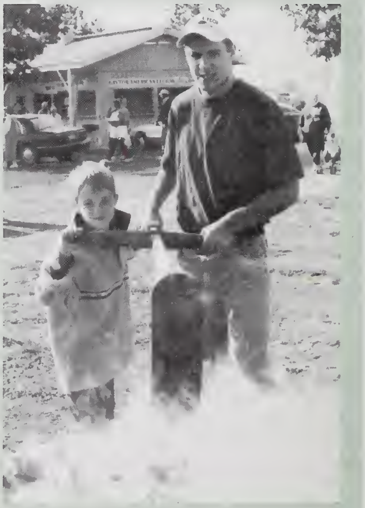
Six North American Mennonite congregations will share their stories of change and growth Oct. 27-29, when Hesston (Kan.) College hosts its Evangelism Storytelling Festival.

Participating will be South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church; Plainview Mennonite Church, Albany, Ore.; River of Life Fellowship, Waterloo, Ont.; Harrisonville (Mo.) Mennonite Church; Cape Christian Fellowship, Cape Coral, Fla.; and Buhler (Kan.) Mennonite Brethren Church.

The festival is part of a series of Anabaptist Vision and Discipleship events sponsored twice a year by the college's Bible and Ministry Center.

MEDA to hold annual convention

VANCOUVER—Graham Kerr, TV's *Galloping Gourmet,* will be the featured speaker at Mennonite Economic Development Associates' annual convention Nov. 2-5 in Vancouver. Also speaking will be Walter Hachborn, president of Home Hardware, Canada's largest dealer-owned home hardware company; Laura Nash, director of the Center for Values-Centered Leadership at Harvard Divinity School; and Mesach Krisetya, president of Mennonite World Conference.—*MEDA News Service*



Jim Bishop

Getting steamed

Jarrett Nice, 7, of Lyndurst, Va., lends a hand to Spencer Nice of Stuarts Draft, Va., in boiling apple butter at the Virginia Relief Sale in Harrisonburg. The Oct. 6-7 event raised nearly $174,000 for Mennonite Central Committee.

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Third Way Café is produced by Mennonite Media, a department of Mennonite Board of Missions.

MDS steps in to open project in Georgia

CAMILLA, Ga.—Yachtres Jackson did not believe her ears when told that a crew of nine carpenters from Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) was going to frame her house in one day. Now that three homes stand in Camilla, where two tornadoes left only scattered remnants of mobile homes last Valentine's Day, Jackson and her neighbors are having a difficult time believing their eyes.

"I'm telling people to go out there and look at it," says community member Laura Vann. "They don't believe it. There was a slab there Monday morning and a house by night. That usually takes weeks."

The carpenters, employees of Bender Construction of Goshen, Ind., joined a handful of other volunteers Sept. 18-22 during the first week for the new MDS project in Camilla.

When contractor Bob Bender decided to take on the challenge of framing the houses in one week, he was planning to bring a vanload of 10 or 12 carpenters with him. But when the van left for Camilla, there were only eight men aboard, increasing the challenge.

The crew wanted to frame four houses, but rain one day prevented them from setting trusses on a fourth house. The other three houses have been completely framed and shingled. "We would have pulled it off if it hadn't been for the rain," Bender says. "If only I could have had six more hours."

"I am extremely impressed with [the Bender crew]," says Richard Swartzendruber, the MDS contact person for an unaffiliated Mennonite congregation in nearby Meigs. "They are an excellent asset to the cause."

Swartzendruber and other volunteers from Meigs Mennonite Church and congregations in Montezuma, Ga., have been working with disaster survivors since the storms struck Camilla in February. These volunteers provided immediate cleanup and repair assistance, repairing five roofs in a week's time.

But the worst damage was irreparable. With 205 homes completely destroyed in Mitchell County alone, the process of rebuilding was far more than the local volunteers could handle by themselves.

As months passed and dozens of families were still without homes, the MDS binational office in Akron, Pa., offered Swartzendruber some help. By opening a project in Camilla, MDS is now able to house and feed volunteers from across the United States and Canada.

"This is a low-income area," says Vann, wearing a T-shirt that says, "Stop me before I volunteer again." She is now in her seventh month of volunteering with Community Recovery, a local program that addresses immediate needs of the storm survivors.

Community Recovery is working with MDS to help connect survivors like Jackson with volunteers like the Bender crew. While Community Recovery helps families obtain loans for building materials, MDS provides volunteers to carry out the construction. The Camilla project is expected to run through April 2001.—*Ted Houser of MDS News Service*

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by the way ...

The oldest Mennonite congregation outside Europe and North America is at Kayu Apu, Indonesia, formed in 1853.

Correction: The percentages of increase in some school enrollments were incorrect in the Oct. 10 issue. Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary was up 5.7 percent, Bethel College was up 6.1 percent, Bluffton College was up 4.3 percent, Eastern Mennonite University was up 5 percent, and EMU graduate programs were up 48 percent.

Mennonite mutual fund launched in Canada

Three Mennonite institutions have joined efforts to create a new mutual fund to allow investors opportunities consistent with their faith principles. Called Meritas Financial Inc., it is a joint venture of Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA), Mennonite Foundation of Canada and Mennonite Savings and Credit Union of Waterloo, Ont.

The fund will screen out stocks such as tobacco and military-related investments while seeking investments consistent with Mennonite values.

MMA has offered a similar mutual fund, Praxis, in the United States for the past six years. "We are excited about partnering with our sister organization in Canada to offer socially concerned investors in Canada the opportunity to make faith-based investments," says Praxis president John L. Liechty.

Meritas' startup is planned before the end of the year.—*The Marketplace*

Sarasota school cleared to offer degrees

SARASOTA, Fla.—Goshen (Ind.) College's 2-year-old Sarasota campus can now prepare to offer degrees, after receiving accreditation from the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA).

Following a review of the Sarasota program, the NCA extended its accreditation of the Goshen campus to include Sarasota. Goshen-Sarasota will offer two bachelor of science degrees: organizational management and management information systems.

Goshen-Sarasota focuses on adult and degree-completion programs. Last year, 500 students took classes at the school.

MCC Canada observes 25 years of Ottawa office

OTTAWA—When Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada first considered establishing a presence in the halls of power of the nation's capital, it was met with resistance.

"It was a bit of a hard sell to the conferences," recalls Abe Wiebe, then an MCC Canada board member representing the Sommerfelder Conference.

But now, 25 years later, fears and concerns about MCC Canada's advocacy work in Ottawa have all but vanished. And Wiebe and others credit Bill Janzen, who has directed the office since the beginning.

"The churches have gained confidence in what you did," Wiebe told Janzen during a Sept. 28-29 anniversary celebration in Ottawa. "I would personally like to thank you. You represented us well."

The weekend also featured discussions of current issues.—*MCC Canada News Service*

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Workers

Bauman, Michael, San Francisco and Elmira, Ont., has begun a 13-month Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment with Jewish Family and Children's Services in San Francisco.

Beyeler, Ben, Orrville, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment at Reliacom in Washington.

Boniferro, Marcia, London, Ont., has begun an 11-month MVS assignment with Northern California Service League in San Francisco.

Clarke, Lauren, Kitchener, Ont., has begun a one-year MVS assignment with House of Friendship and Mennonite Fellowship in Montreal.

Gerber, Anne, Elkhart, Ind., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a caseworker with Bread for the City in Washington.

Births

Gehman, Sarah Elizabeth, Sept. 26, to Jonathan and Terri (Yoder) Gehman, Weyers Cave, Va.

Hostetler, Bailey DeWayne, Oct. 2, to Marlin and Waneta (Weaver) Hostetler, Shipshewana, Ind.

Krabill, Allison Rose, Oct. 2, to Dawn (Klesner) and Tim Krabill, Iowa City, Iowa.

Landis, Matthew Jordan, Oct. 5, to Cheryl and Jeff Landis, Meridian, Miss.

Maillet, Mia Estelle, Sept. 27, to Brad and Carmen (Hackham) Maillet, Des Allemands, La.

Miller, McKynzie Dawn, Oct. 4, to Dawn (Witmer) and Rick Miller, LaGrange, Ind.

Oesch, Caleb Michael, Sept. 10, to Jana (Earnest) and Michael Oesch, Nampa, Idaho.

Serres, Hunter Jay, Oct. 3, to Adam and Becky (Riegsecker) Serres, Archbold, Ohio.

Smith, Brendan James, Oct. 3, to Cheryl (Dueck) and Peter Smith, Los Angeles.

Sommers, Chet Dakota, Sept. 29, to Sherry (Schlabach) and Steven Sommers, Hartville, Ohio.

Zehr, Elizabeth Grace, Sept. 26, to David and Lynne (Echtenkamp) Zehr, Goshen, Ind.

Marriages

Alderfer/Witmer: Rodney Alderfer, Harrisonburg, Va., and Jenelle Witmer, Harrisonburg, Sept. 23 at Bridgewater (Va.) Church of the Brethren.

Andrade/Trejos: Sebastian Andrade, Reedley, Calif., and Sandra Trejos, Reedley, Sept. 23 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Avery/Glunt: Melissa Avery, Roaring Spring, Pa., and Thomas Glunt, Roaring Spring, Sept. 23.

Brenneman/Hartmann: Christine Brenneman, Tavistock, Ont., and Burton Hartmann, Beaconsfield, Que., Aug. 26 at Ingersoll, Ont.

Buchen/Foard: Andrea Buchen, Lancaster, Pa., and Bryan Foard, Lancaster, Sept. 23 at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Lancaster.

Caslick/Filsinger: Michael Caslick, Stratford, Ont., and Tayna Filsinger, Stratford, Sept. 30 at Tavistock (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Chavous/Halteman: James Chavous, Perkasie, Pa., and Victoria Halteman, Green Lane, Pa., Sept. 30.

Coon/McLaughlin: Keith Coon, Newport News, Va., and Kari McLaughlin, Williamsburg, Va., Sept. 23 at Williamsburg Mennonite Church.

Fitzpatrick/Gerczak: Caryn Fitzpatrick, Quakertown, Pa., and Rick Gerczak, Tylersport, Pa., Oct. 7.

Kauffmann/Kilmer: Glen Kauffmann, Goshen, Ind., and Chrissy Kilmer, Elkhart, Ind., Sept. 30 at Kern Road Mennonite Church, South Bend, Ind.

Kraybill/Lind: Sarah Kraybill, Lancaster, Pa., and Matthew Lind, Three Rivers, Mich., Sept. 23 at Mount Joy, Pa.

Rider/Seitz: Todd Rider, Littleton, Mass., and Lori Seitz, Littleton, Sept. 23 at Mishawaka, Ind.

Deaths

Borntrager, Floyd, 91, Bloomfield, Mont., died Sept. 30. Parents: Glen and Cora Chupp Borntrager (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 7 at Red Top Mennonite Church, Bloomfield.

Friedt, Ruth Anna, 95, Orrville, Ohio, died Sept. 23. Parents: David and Anna Pauline Friedt (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 26 at Orrville.

Graybill, Chester, 92, Ephrata, Pa., died Sept. 16. Spouse: (1st) Edith Kennel Graybill (deceased); (2nd) Gladys Stoltzfus Graybill. Parents: Joseph and Susan Benner Graybill (deceased). Other survivors: children Conrad, Stanley, Anne Carpenter, Sarah Martin, Eva Thomas; 11 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 19 at New Holland (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hiebner, Matilda Epp, 80, Henderson, Neb., died Oct. 1 of cancer. Spouse: George Hiebner. Parents: David and Margaret Huebert Epp (deceased). Survivors: children LaRoy, Roberta Bergen; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 4 at Bethesda Mennonite Church, Henderson.

Hildebrand, Gertrude Wiebe, 103, Altona, Man., died Sept. 29. Spouse: Jacob Hildebrand (deceased). Parents: Abram and Helena Wiebe (deceased). Other survivors: children Tina Martens, Peter, Helen Pappel, Toots Sawatzky; 32 grandchildren; 74 great-grandchildren; six great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 3 at Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church.

Kroeker, Pete, 87, Inola, Okla., died Sept. 10 from heart problems. Spouse: Bertha Loewen Kroeker (deceased). Parents: George and Margaret Pankratz Kroeker (deceased). Survivors: children Peter, Beverly Saunders, Cheryl Kiker; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 12 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola.

Kurtz, Grace Nora Kennel, 82, Lititz, Pa., died Oct. 1. Spouse: Urie Kurtz (deceased). Survivors: children Joyce Burkholder, Doris Henry, Gerald; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 4 at Conestoga Mennonite Church, Morgantown, Pa.

Landis, Ernest, 82, Souderton, Pa., died Sept. 27. Spouse: Marion Trauger Landis. Parents: Samuel and Pearl Miller Landis (deceased). Other survivors: children Larry, David, John, Sara Brown; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 1 at Rockhill Mennonite Church, Telford, Pa.

Martin, Jacob, 83, Harrisonburg, Va., died Sept. 27 of cancer. Spouse: Esther Stoltzfus Martin. Parents: Jacob and Rhoda Martin (deceased). Other survivors: children Ernest, Carl, Robert, Lois Maust; nine grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 1 at Lindale Mennonite Church, Linville, Va.

Roth, Erma Baechler, 77, Tavistock, Ont., died Sept. 6. Spouse: Mahlon Roth. Parents: Amos and Katie Baechler (deceased). Other survivors: children Irene Gollintz, Beulah Patterson, Sherman, Cephas, Murray, Eugene; 16 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 9 at Tavistock Mennonite Church.

Sheffler, Luella Schmidt, 83, Kirkland, Wash., died Aug. 15. Spouse: Andrew Sheffler (deceased). Parents: Peter and Marie Voth Schmidt (deceased). Survivors: children Lawrence, Gerald, Richard, Stanley, Stephanie; 10 grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 26 at Mennonite Community Church, Fresno, Calif.

Statum, Magdalena Froese, 80, Chouteau, Okla., died Aug. 29 of cancer. Spouse: Carrol Statum. Parents: Henry and Agatha Jantzen Froese (deceased). Other survivors: children Christy, Mary Muse; three grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 1 at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla.

Stevanus, Kenneth, 62, Williamsburg, Va., died Sept. 13 of cancer. Spouse: Marie Stevanus. Parents: Florence and Ralph Stevanus (deceased). Other survivors: children Eugene, Mark; one grandson. Funeral: Sept. 16 at Warwick River Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.

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- **Mennonite Central Committee** seeks a ***developer of policy and worker care systems***. MCC Human Resources wants to hire a full-time person to develop and revise policies and to improve systems for worker care. Contact your nearest MCC office for an application or a copy of the job description. Application review begins Oct. 30.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, Akron, Pa., seeks ***computer analyst/programmer***. Experience in analysis and computer systems required. Programming experience with Visual FoxPro and Lotus Notes preferred as well as Novell software/Windows NT server networking experience.

  To inquire, please fax updated resume with salary requirements to Sherrie Ober, 717-859-2622; email <smo@villages-mcc.org>.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** seeks a full-time ***executive director***. Responsibilities include vision and passion for the ministry, leadership skills, interest and experience in development and spiritual maturity.

  Please send a letter of application and resume by Nov. 30, 2000, to Gloria Horst Rosenberger, Association President, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Rt. 5 Box 145, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666-8908. For more information on Laurelville: <www.laurelville.org>.

- **Anabaptist and Brethren Agency**, Lancaster, Pa., a general agency servicing property mutual aid service providers across the country, is seeking an ***underwriter/CSR*** for a full-time salaried position. We have preference for insurance agency experience, current P/C license and strong analytical, communication and computer skills. We will consider appropriate experience in lieu of some of these requirements. We offer an exceptional working environment, salary and benefits commensurate with your skills.

  Please forward letter of interest and resume to Anabaptist and Brethren Agency, P.O. Box 5364, Lancaster, PA 17606-5364; fax 717-509-4549.

- **Kings View Mental Health System** (KVMHS), a Mennonite-sponsored not-for-profit organization, seeks a visionary ***chief executive officer*** with strong financial acumen to lead its multisite organization in central California. Headquartered in Reedley, KVMHS provides a broad range of outpatient behavioral health services, social services and residential services for adolescents from 20 locations in a 10-county area. Minimum candidate requirements are: active Christian involved in local congregation, appreciation of Mennonite-Anabaptist heritage, master's-level education, 8 years of senior management experience and strong interpersonal skills. Preferred candidates will have extensive health-care and multisite management experience.

  Send resume/inquiries to Kirk Stiffney, Mennonite Health Services, 234 S. Main St. Suite A, Goshen, IN 46526; fax 219-534-3254.

- **Ten Thousand Villages**, Akron, Pa., is seeking to fill the following positions immediately: ***media coordinator, accounts receivable accountant, computer analyst/programmer***.

  If interested, please contact Sherrie Ober at 717-859-8117; email <smo@villages-mcc.org>.

- **Menno House**, a live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2001. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** has an opening for a full-time ***middle school teacher*** beginning Jan. 18, 2001. A bachelor's degree in education is required. This teacher would teach social studies, Bible and Spanish. Experience with middle school students is preferred.

  Send a letter of application, resume and LACMS application to MCDS, attn. Crist Peachey, Administrator, 686 Lebanon Rd., Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Spruce Lake Retreat**, a dynamic, multifaceted camp and retreat ministry affiliated with the Mennonite Church, seeks a ***business manager***—a mission-minded person with business/accounting experience and computer savvy. Responsibilities include accounting, financial reporting and forecasting, risk management and computer systems administration. Spruce Lake is located in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pennsylvania and serves over 20,000 guests annually with a $2 million budget. Salary and liberal benefits package. On-camp housing available. Position open immediately.

  Send resume to Executive Director, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325; 800-822-7505; fax 570-595-0328; email <retreat@enter.net>.

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants for a full-time, tenure track position in ***communication and theater*** beginning fall 2001. Doctorate in theater or communication preferred; ABD may be considered. Some college/university teaching experience preferred. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate courses in theater (acting, production, directing, oral interpretation), directing college theater productions, providing leadership toward the development of a major in theater and guiding the use of new theater resources on campus. Rank/salary commensurate with background and experience within the college pay scale. For more information see <www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs.employment.htm>. Review of applications begins Jan. 1, 2001, and continues until an appointment is made.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vita, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **The Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba** is inviting nominations and applications for the full-time position of ***evangelism and service director***. Responsibilities include the creative development of new ministry areas and opportunities (in cooperation with CMM congregations and other related organizations), with close ties to CMM camping and media ministries. Qualifications: a mature commitment to Jesus Christ; agreement with the Mennonite Confession of Faith and membership in the Mennonite Church; seminary training desired, preferably at a Mennonite school; congregational or other church-related experience; ability to lead an emerging, many-faceted ministry; willingness to work in a collegial manner with other staff members, congregations and related organizations. Salary and benefits follow CMM guidelines. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

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by Rich Preheim

The politics of religion

With another election season steaming toward its conclusion, questions again arise about the intersection of faith and politics. Earlier this year, the Republican Party's Catholic Task Force declared that the GOP's positions are closest to the teachings of the Catholic Church. But that isn't necessarily so, says *National Catholic Reporter.*

The newspaper reported on an examination of U.S. House and Senate votes on issues determined to be of Catholic concern from 1993 to 1998. Those issues were taken from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops' Office of Government Liaison and Network, a Catholic lobbying organization.

The study found that Catholic and Republican causes coincided just once: attempts to override the partial-birth abortion veto. During the 104th Congress (1995-96), 94 percent of the Republicans in the House and 88 percent of the Republicans in the Senate voted for the legislation. Only 37 percent of House Democrats and 12 percent of Senate Democrats voted for it.

Otherwise, Democratic legislators outdistanced their Republican counterparts. For example, during the first session of the 104th Congress, 83 percent of Democrats in the House and 81 percent in the Senate voted in support of Catholic positions, compared with 9 percent of Republicans in the House and 8 percent in the Senate.

A few examples of specific legislation from the 103rd, 104th and 105th Congresses:

- Seventy percent of House Democrats voted against repealing an assault weapons ban, compared with 19 percent of Republicans.
- One hundred percent of Senate Democrats and 97 percent of House Democrats supported increasing the minimum wage. Fifty-three percent of Senate Republicans and 33 percent of House Republicans voted for the bill.
- Sixty-five percent of House Democrats and 49 percent of Senate Democrats voted against a bill to tighten trade restrictions with Cuba. Republicans supported the measure, with only 2 percent of representatives and 4 percent of senators voting against it.
- Seventy-eight percent of Democrat senators voted against cutting aid to Vietnam, compared with 38 percent of Republicans.

National Catholic Reporter also noted that from 1972 to 1999, the number of Republican Catholics has increased from 22 to 49 in the House and from three to 11 in the Senate.

Winning the war for peace

Pacifists continue to fight militarism around the globe, achieving some small victories. In Germany, a group of Quaker activists were indicted for "incitement to commit a crime." They had produced a pamphlet appealing to members of the German military in Kosovo, which included encouraging soldiers to "leave your unit" if they determined that their service was illegal, says *The Reporter for Conscience' Sake.* All but one of the activists were found not guilty, in part because they were correct in raising questions about the legality of the Germans' service in Kosovo.

Meanwhile in Canada, two Catholics and an Anglican were found guilty of mischief for trying to remove a sword embedded in a cross in a war memorial in Toronto. The judge said the defendants' actions were honorable but their arguments not valid under law, reports *The Observer.* The three were convicted but released with the promise that they would not try again to remove the sword. Then with a smile, the judge told them, "You may have won a battle on your way to winning the war."

Two sets of footprints

"Footprints" is easily one of the most popular poems in contemporary Christendom, widely printed and inspiring millions. While the poem is well-known, its author had long been unknown. Now there are two candidates for authorship, according to *ChristianWeek.*

Canadian Margaret Fishback Powers claims to have written "Footprints" in 1964, inspired during a walk on the beach of Lake Ontario. Mary Stevenson, who died last year, reportedly wrote the poem in 1936 as a motherless 14-year-old when she was locked out of her Chester, Pa., home one night by her abusive father.

Stevenson's 1939 handscribbled poem has been authenticated by a forensic scientist. Powers says she lost her original in a 1980 move from Ontario to British Columbia but discovered a handwritten copy in her wedding album seven years later.

Both alleged authors' stories have been chronicled in biographies, and both poems have been copyrighted in the United States, Stevenson's in 1984 and Powers' in 1987.

Praying without ceasing

Oct. 7 marked the 2,500th consecutive daily Prayer for Peace service in the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints Temple in Independence, Mo.

Tidbits

- Now available are Torah trading cards of famous rabbis, complete with statistics including number of Gentiles converted and beard length.—*Spirituality & Health*
- "God" can be found on 5.6 million Internet websites. —*The Other Side*
- Four out of 10 adults in the United States listen to some Christian radio programming during a typical week.—*Wireless Age*
- There were 63.1 million Lutherans in the world as of 1999, an increase of 1.6 million from 1998.—*The Lutheran*
- Eighty-four percent of pastors say they get their sermon illustrations from personal experiences. —*Leadership*

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Rich Preheim

Celebration and commitment

It's a scene oft-repeated in story and song: Soldiers return from war and are greeted with great celebrations, blaring trumpets, flying banners, stirring anthems, the keys to the city and other such celebrations commemorating the completion of an arduous struggle.

The time has come for that to be an example for the people of the emerging Mennonite Church USA.

Such a militaristic model admittedly appears inconsistent with our beliefs as a peace church. But let's be honest: Our wrestling with denominational membership and homosexuality has been a long, drawn-out battle. Forces on all sides rallied in the belief that their causes were right. They exchanged volleys, rhetoric and propaganda. There were summits and conferences. And there have been casualties—individuals, congregations and maybe even area conferences who have withdrawn or may withdraw from this body that is to become Mennonite Church USA.

But there has been a cease-fire. Last month the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board approved membership guidelines to send to delegates for action at next year's convention in Nashville, Tenn. The guidelines are not perfect, as folks on all sides of the issue can attest. But after all the messiness of our conflict over the issue, the guidelines are good enough.

So it is time for hostilities to conclude. Time for a ticker-tape parade. Time to break out the party hats and the noisemakers. Time to revel in the hope for the future of this peculiar little fragment of God's people.

It's not necessarily a celebration of the guidelines themselves. It's difficult to get excited about something that even its supporters admit is less than ideal. But it was a necessary step in the process. And we can celebrate that, with the membership issue settled for now, we can move forward with the joyous anticipation of the renewal of our witness, ministry and faithfulness.

That is, after all, the reason, we decided to bring together the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. But the membership/homosexuality issue clouded our vision for the new church and sidetracked our efforts to achieve it. Precious time and energy had to be dedicated to the conflict, which came to dominate the merger process.

But it's not just a merger anymore. It's time to devote ourselves to the process of transformation. It's not just about the structural reorganization of our two groups. It's about seeking and supporting ways to best contribute to the building of the kingdom here and now and in the future.

Instead of membership, we can concentrate on becoming a missional church. That's the goal of the Mission Transformation Team: Instead of missions being one activity of the church, according to a preliminary proposal, "everything that the church does should be oriented toward proclamation of the reign of God by word and deed."

Instead of homosexuality, we can concentrate on serving out of God's abundant blessings. Firstfruits giving is the foundation of the proposal being considered for funding the new church, a belief that the church lives "in an abundant place rather than a scarce place," says Funding Committee member Mark Vincent. That's a radical departure from our business as usual.

Of course, these and other exciting efforts require support. The new denomination's leadership is asking all congregations to lift a special offering on Oct. 29 to help raise the $800,000 needed to pay for transformation. But it is not just paying for salaries, legal expenses, committee work. It's an investment in Mennonite Church USA. It's a time to celebrate our future together, heeding God's call to ever greater faithfulness.

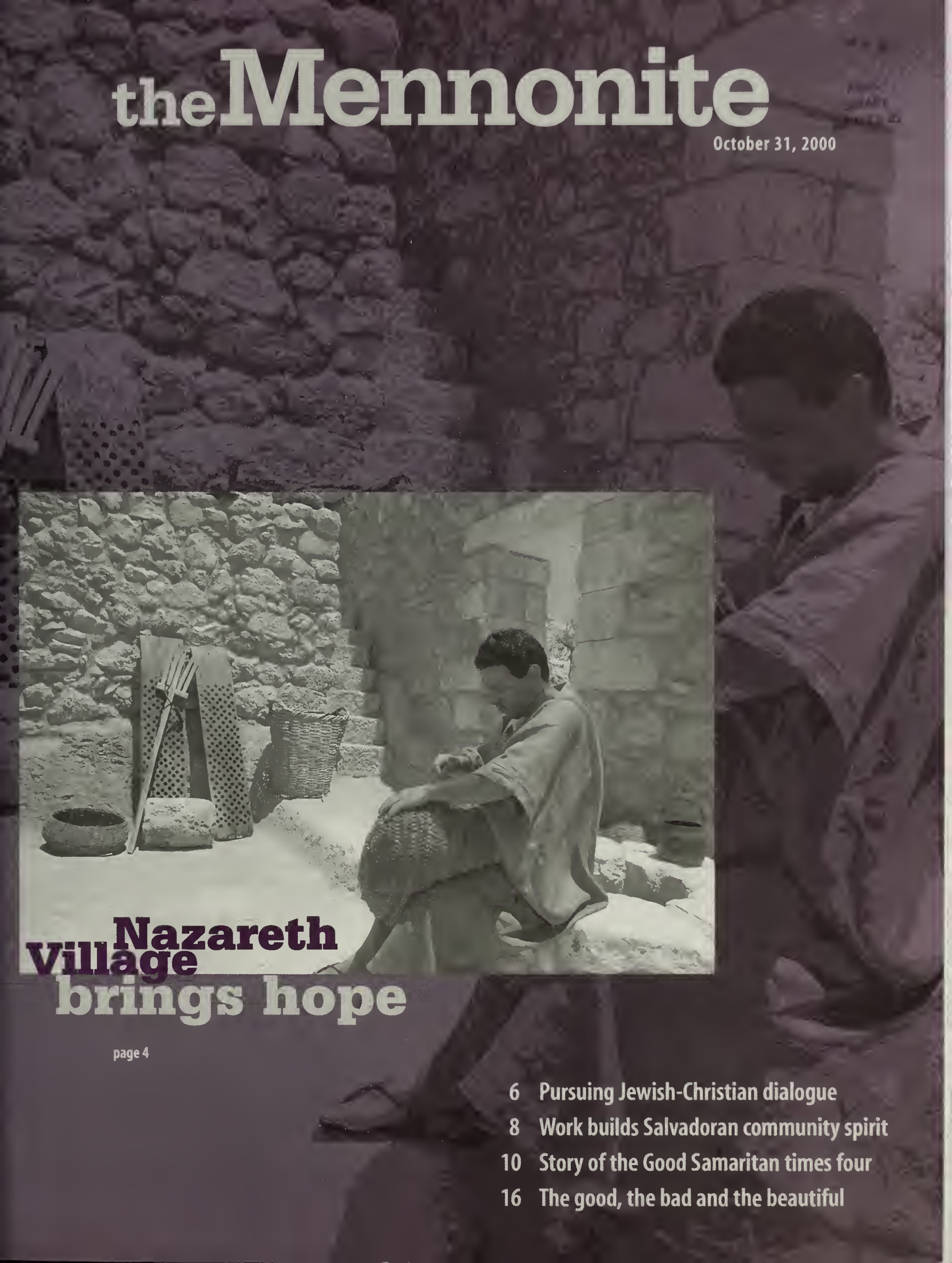
Just imagine the symbolism of that morning when individuals and congregations across the country set aside their disagreements over membership/homosexuality—and anything else—to express jointly their commitment to the work ahead through their financial support.

That's not to say the membership/homosexuality issue has disappeared. The guidelines are not a final solution to deeper questions of scriptural interpretation, discernment and accountability. But when those issues do pop up again, pray that we can address them with renewed energy and commitment to God and to each other.—*rp*

It's about seeking and supporting ways to best contribute to the building of the kingdom here and now and in the future.

the Mennonite

October 31, 2000



Nazareth Village brings hope

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Get out the vote

I greatly admire John D. Roth and the beliefs from which he writes and teaches, but I winced to see his article declare why Mennonites should not vote ("The Rites and Rights of Voting," Oct. 17). Is this really the responsible choice for those who seek to be voices for the poor and oppressed, witnesses for peace and stewards of the earth? The article implies that it is, especially for Mennonites, who can claim a long tradition of political nonparticipation, as well as (I will add) agrarian isolation and limited formal education. But Roth, I'm sure, knows better than I do that such a stance is not the only historically Mennonite option—Menno Simons himself maintained that faithful Christians could justly participate in political affairs, and even rule.

As Election Day approaches, I do not believe that Mennonites should seek the best way to preserve their moral self-satisfaction, hands undirtied by the worldly necessities of cooperation and compromise. I will be voting for the first time, and I hope that this act of thoughtful political participation may further the kingdom of God.—*Timothy Shenk, Goshen, Ind.*

Roth argues that from an Anabaptist perspective, differences among the candidates Gore and Bush are illusory. While I agree, there are other candidates. Green Party presidential hopeful Ralph Nader opens speeches with, "Welcome to the politics of joy and justice." Among other things, Nader pledges to cut the military budget by $100 billion, eliminate the death penalty, implement universal health coverage for every American, raise the minimum wage to a livable wage of $10 an hour and end the pillaging of God's earth by making solar power a reality. While you may not agree with all he stands for, it's important to realize that the difference between Nader and the front-runners is far from illusory.

While God's power is final, why not leverage some of our own with our government? There are more than 40 million Americans without any health insurance. In Canada, for example, thanks to voting, there are zero Canadians without health insurance. Abstaining from presidential elections could signal to others that Mennonites are pleased with our material abundance and quality of life and less concerned about change for those who have less.

The most disturbing aspect of conscientiously abstaining from presidential elections is what it could allow. If a political tyrant of Hitler proportions rises to prominence, are we to sit at home, pray and leave the voting to others? Where do you draw the line? God's power and civic power can work together. As a wise man once said, "If you don't get turned on to politics, politics will turn on you."—*Peter Byer, Washington*

I would like to praise Roth for tackling a tough issue for Mennonites. But I do take issue with some of his points. First, he only deals with the two major parties. He did not even mention third parties. Parties such as the Pacifist Party and the Green Party offer some possible alternatives for Mennonites who are concerned with issues of peace and justice. There are scores of other parties fielding candidates as well.

Second, Roth indicates that voting binds an individual's loyalty to a nation. I vote and consider myself one of the most critical and least loyal Americans I know. To vote doesn't mean to support every policy of death the United States has. To vote is actually when I can express my opposition to government policy. It seems to me that if you do not vote, you are endorsing what is happening by not expressing an opinion through the ballot box.

This November I would encourage Mennonites to go ahead and vote for president, voice your opinion through the ballot box. But remember, you do not have to vote Bush or Gore. Vote your conscience, write someone in or vote for a third-party candidate.—*Keith Swartzendruber, South Bend, Ind.*

I am afraid that many people will use Roth's article as an excuse for not voting but also as an excuse for not doing anything to change the way the elections and political system work. Roth's article seems to call for passivism. I don't think that was Roth's intention, but that was the impression that came through. Just not voting will not send a powerful message to anyone. If you don't feel represented by the presidential candidates, if you are not satisfied with the way the political system works, if you want change, you will have to do something.

This is why thousands took to the streets to protest the World Trade Organization in Seattle, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Washington, the Democratic and Republican conventions in Los Angeles and Philadelphia. This is why I joined in the protest at the presidential debate in St. Louis on Oct. 17 and why I will again join thousands in the protest calling for the closure of the U.S.

the**Mennonite**

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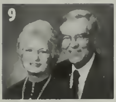

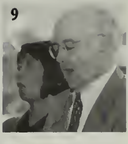

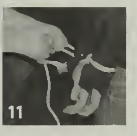

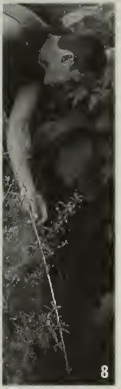

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.

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readers say

Army School of the Americas in November.

I think it is OK if people decide not to vote in November, but we should be aware that especially Mennonites do have a responsibility to actively get involved in the policies of this country and work for change, because of our Christian beliefs.—*Markus Weyel, Topeka, Kan.*

I read carefully Roth's comments for a Mennonite position against voting. He revisits and defends a stance few Mennonites feel called to today. He noted this, somewhat in passing, saying that most members of the General Conference Mennonite Church have long supported voting as a limited participation in civil society. Today many members of the Mennonite Church also embrace a view that does not see voting in national or local elections as participating in ultimate issues of theology and principle or as giving expression to nationalism or patriotism, even though some in our society like to put that slant on voting. John Howard Yoder once referred to voting as voicing "likes and dislikes," not making major statements of principle.

If this is the case, it seems to me *The Mennonite* might also seek writers who offer guidance on voting. How do we approach this from an Anabaptist/Mennonite framework, since many of us do not see it as an expression of ultimate things, war and peace, military service, etc? If voting expresses support for some things a candidate stands for but not everything, how do we approach this activity? If voting is participating in society's talk on "likes and dislikes," it does not take on the profundity that Roth suggests we should ascribe to it.

It seems to me that, as many of us are participating in this rather modest civic function, *The Mennonite* could look beyond just the anti-voting position.—*Bob Herr, Lancaster, Pa.*

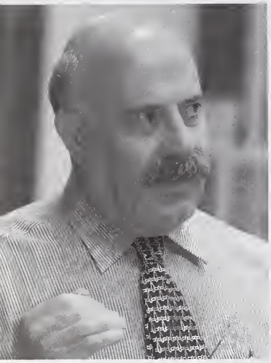
Cover photo
by Tom Price

Living stones

Nazareth Village gives hope to the remnant of an Arab Christian community.

by Tom Price

Tom Price



The purpose of Nazareth Village is to share the teaching and parables of Jesus with visitors.

—Nakhle Bishara

Nearly 1 million pilgrims come to Nazareth each year, seeking some trace of Jesus' life. Few stay more than two hours. They visit the Basilica of the Annunciation, the traditional site of Mary's home, where the angel Gabriel announced the Incarnation. Many also stop at Mary's Well, the old town's only source of water, where the child Jesus undoubtedly accompanied his mother. Then they board a tour bus and leave.

"They are coming from far away to feel what Jesus Christ felt, and they cannot feel it," says Violette Khoury, a Greek Catholic owner of a Nazareth pharmacy. "As a child living in Nazareth, I always felt there was something precious here—the sky, the songs of the birds in the morning. This is the same atmosphere when Jesus lived here, walked here and played in the same places. ... Seeing the place and the tourists coming and visiting the basilica, I felt something deep is missing. They never seem to sit and see how Jesus lived."

Violette serves with four other Nazarenes to make up the executive committee for Nazareth Village's international board of trustees. Mennonite Board of Missions' D. Michael Hostetler serves as executive director. They believe that when the first-century farm and village officially open, Nazareth Village will offer pilgrims searching for Jesus something unlike anything else in the Middle East—a chance to see the land of Jesus as Jesus himself may have seen it. Although Nazareth Village has received visitors since April, an official opening date has yet to be set.

On a terraced hillside at the edge of the old city, visitors will meet costumed villagers at Nazareth Village's well, in its synagogue or going through the routines of work and life in three limestone houses. By 2001, an estimated 150,000 pilgrims will hear the parables of Jesus, including one that seems to describe the 12-acre site, where 1996 excavations uncovered a first-century winepress, three watchtowers, terraces and an irrigation system. ("A man planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a pit for the winepress and built a watchtower," Jesus said in Mark 12:1.) Over time, workers will expand Nazareth Village to nearly two dozen structures, including an olive press and sheepfold.

"The purpose of Nazareth Village is to share the teaching and parables of Jesus with visitors," says Nakhle Bishara, a Greek Orthodox Christian who is medical director at Nazareth Hospital. (The hospital's sponsor, Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society of Scotland, owns the land on which Nazareth Village is located.) Nakhle, a ninth-generation Nazarene, conceived the vision for Nazareth Village in 1985 out of concern that his fellow Arab Christians were losing the ancient cultural nuances of Jesus' teaching—meanings expatriate visitors never seemed to understand.

"Tourists who come to Nazareth ... come to the country and see the dead sites with dead stones. But Jesus Christ is still living in the lives of the people," says board member George Khalil, administrator of Emmaus Bible School and a carpenter from Nazareth. "We want them to see living stones in the lives of the people who live here."

Largest Arab city: More than 80 percent of tourists fail to realize that a Christian community still exists in Nazareth, Israel's largest Arab city. Nazareth contains the largest concentration of Christians in Israel. About 30 percent of its 60,000 residents in 1998 were Christians. Yet as Arab citizens of a Jewish state living in a community dominated by Muslims, Nazareth's Christians find themselves marginalized on multiple fronts.

- Throughout the Middle East, Christians are leaving the Holy Land at a rate four times that of Muslims, mostly to seek economic opportunity. While Christians made up as much as 20 percent of Palestine's population in 1900, today they represent about 2 percent of the region's population, or nearly 180,000 Christians. "In one more generation, we will barely exist," says Bernard Sabella, a professor at Bethlehem University who has researched Christian emigration for the Middle East Council of Churches. "At the current rate of decline, the Christian population will be a fraction of 1 percent in the year 2020."
- As it is waning, the Christian community also is fractured by denominational differences. "The sense of being one Christian com-

Tom Price

Something precious here: One of the reconstructed houses in Nazareth Village

munity in Nazareth never existed," Violette says. "People are believers, but it's not a very deep, inner spiritual life. ... The spirit of Jesus was far from us. Nobody talked about it [but] ... there is a spiritual emptiness."

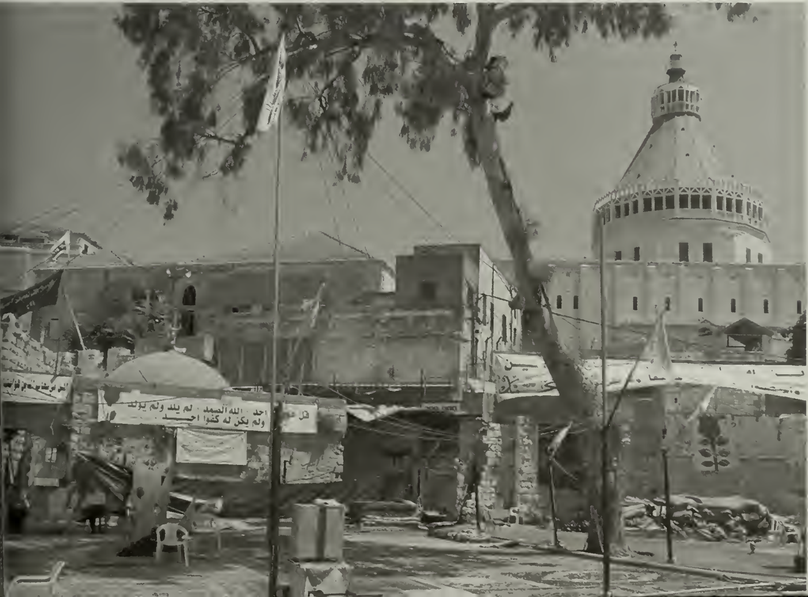
- For decades, Nazareth's Arab Christians have faced economic and political discrimination from the Jewish hegemony. The neighboring Jewish community of Upper Nazareth, established in the 1960s on confiscated Arab land, remains a prominent symbol of this discrimination. There seemed to be signs of change in the late 1990s, when Nazareth, with Jerusalem, was designated Israel's top tourist priority. In anticipation of 4 million tourists in 2000, the city announced $80 million plans to widen streets, build 1,000 new hotel rooms and create a Venetian-style plaza next to the basilica.

But in 1998, Muslim activists seized control of land cleared for the civic plaza, erecting a makeshift mosque. They called for the construction of a $20 million mosque that would overshadow the basilica (the largest church in the Middle East). After more than 500 years of peaceful coexistence between Christians and Muslims, violent clashes erupted on the site on Christmas 1998 and Easter 1999. The conflict even marred the visit last March by Pope John Paul II, whose motorcade was diverted by Israeli authorities from Nazareth's main thoroughfare for security reasons.

But just as Jesus told parables so people would be "ever seeing but never perceiving," Nazareth Village is becoming a living parable for Christians in Nazareth. Most significant, even before its official opening, is the way Nazareth Village has begun to draw together a divided Christian community—with even Jews and Muslims as volunteers—that sees the project as a sign of hope for Nazareth's future.

Breaking the barrier: Five years ago, Nakhle and Michael began the work at Nazareth Village by meeting Christians from Nazareth's varied churches. "Most of them were suspicious about it, and it took some time to break

Violent clashes: The proposed site of a new mosque; in the background is the Basilica of the Annunciation.



Tom Price

The sense of being one Christian community in Nazareth never existed. People are believers, but it's not a very deep, inner spiritual life. ... The spirit of Jesus was far from us.

—Violette Khoury

Living stones

continued from page 5

the suspicion," says Nakhle. "After breaking the barrier of suspicion, they saw tremendous value."

"God has moved and transformed our board," says Michael. "When I came I thought our ministry would start when we opened. [But] God's work began immediately. There is so much to be excited about here. In people's lives, transformation is going on as a result of our coming together.

"We live in a community where hope is a precious commodity," he adds, "and Nazareth Village ... is one of the few things I have observed that seems to bring hope."

Even when they are not directly associated with the project, local Christians see its potential. One Orthodox leader, after touring the site, said, "Nazareth Village will be an anchor for Christianity in Nazareth."

Michael says, "The local community is beginning to appreciate our commitment to truly serving the local church."

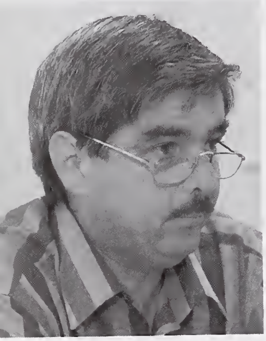
At the same time, says Nazareth Village consultant Stephen Pfann, a Dead Sea Scrolls editor and director of Jerusalem's Center for the Study of Early Christianity: "I hope it will be a place where all the different faiths—Muslims, Jews and Christians—can go back and recapture a bit of their common heritage coming from the settings at the beginning of Jesus' life and ministry. It is like a time warp; you walk through a door and there you are back in the first century."

"The farther we go back in time, the fewer differences we have and the more we have in common," says Mark Goodman, a former Israeli Antiquities Authority archaeological conservator, who has supervised the restoration work. "It is an Arab project in the biggest Arab city in Israel. It's funded [partly] by American Christians, and they're building a first-century Jewish village. I see it as a tremendous potential tool for bringing these communities together."

The experience begins in the Nazareth YMCA with a walk through a series of displays that retell the history and culture of Nazareth and take the visitor back in time to the first century. Visitors then step onto a terraced hillside, which provides the focus for a "parable walk." The walk ends in the recreated first-century village.

"See the city that Jesus lived in. Feel the atmosphere. Read the parables. ... You can feel how everything is coming out of what Jesus experienced here," Violette says. "If we start reading the parables, hearing about life and talking about Jesus Christ in Nazareth, the land will become a holy place. It will offer visitors—whether [from] far away or near—a place where they can see him themselves and communicate with Jesus Christ."

Tom Price



There is so much to be excited about here. In people's lives, transformation is going on as a result of our coming together.

—D. Michael Hostetler

Tom Price, director of communications for Mennonite Board of Missions in Elkhart, Ind., visited Nazareth Village in May.

Speakin
in Jewis

by Alain Epp Weaver

After centuries of blood libels, pogroms, overt and covert discrimination and, most horrifying, Holocaust, what positive things can Jews possibly say about Christianity? In September a group of Jewish scholars addressed this question. Four academics composed a remarkable statement, "Dabru Emet" ("Speak the Truth"), which was then signed by scores of other Jewish academics, rabbis and local leaders. Mennonite churches should accept the statement as a gift, using it as a springboard for internal reflection about abiding anti-Judaism within Mennonite churches and as an opportunity to better articulate Mennonite reservations about Zionism as an expression of Jewish faith.

Centuries of Christian persecution of Jews have not fostered a willingness on the part of most Jews to engage Christianity in positive conversation. And in an age of assimilation, a Jewish statement about positive dimensions of Christianity might be viewed as a concession to relativism that further undermines Jewish identity. Christians worldwide should admire and be grateful that such a large group of Jewish clergy and academics have agreed to dialogue in spite of this history of persecution and continuing assimilation.

Dabru Emet was in part a response to various statements by Catholic and Protestant bodies over the past decades that have sought to reform Christian teaching and preaching in order to acknowledge "God's enduring covenant with the Jewish people" and to "celebrate the contribution of Judaism" to Christian faith. Traditionally, the statement says, "Christians have tended to characterize Judaism as a failed religion." But Christians are slowly beginning to ask what they can learn from Judaism.

Because of this, the authors reason, "it is time for Jews to reflect on what Judaism may now say about Christianity." The statement sounds a conciliatory note early on: "We rejoice that, through Christianity, hundreds of millions of people have entered into relationship with the God of Israel." Not only do Jews and Christians both worship the God of the matriarchs and patriarchs, both embrace the Bible (the Tanakh, or Old Testament) and both believe in the struggle for peace and justice. "Jews and Christians must work together for justice and peace," Dabru Emet says.

the truth hristian dialogue

While affirming commonalities between Judaism and Christianity, Dabru Emet does not ignore abiding theological differences. "Jews and Christians interpret the Bible differently on many points," the statement says. "Such differences must always be respected." The authors insist that "Jews can respect Christians' faithfulness to their revelation just as we expect Christians to respect our faithfulness to our revelation." Mutual respect between Jews and Christians should not be allowed to obscure ongoing difference, which will not be resolved "until God redeems the entire world as promised in Scripture." Christians who believe that respect must be accorded to all with whom they enter into conversation, particularly our elder siblings in the faith, and who also anticipate God's redemption of the world can affirm the authors' approach to Jewish-Christian difference.

In perhaps its most daring declaration, Dabru Emet acknowledges that "Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon." True, centuries of Christian anti-Judaism and violence against Jews created the cultural and political backdrop in which Nazi ideology and practice thrived. However, "Nazism itself was not an inevitable outcome of Christianity." Some Jewish commentators suggest that Dabru Emet lets Christianity off the hook on this point. We Mennonites, who have rarely wielded political power in a way to make it possible to use political power against Jews, certainly may be tempted to let ourselves off the hook. However, our stance in conversation with our Jewish brothers and sisters should not be marked by self-righteously proclaiming our innocence of violence against Jews but by a readiness to acknowledge and repent of enduring anti-Jewish prejudice in our midst.

There is much to celebrate in Dabru Emet. Not surprisingly, for such a wide-ranging yet concise document, the statement is also not free of internal tension, which should lead to further conversation between Christians and Jews, particularly on the question of the theological significance of the modern state of Israel.

"The most important event for Jews since the Holocaust," according to the statement, "has been the re-establishment of a Jewish state in the Promised Land." The authors applaud the fact that "as members of a biblically based religion, Christians appreciate that Israel was promised—and given—to Jews as the physical center of the covenant between them and God" and commend Christians for supporting the state of Israel "for reasons far more profound than mere politics."

This brief affirmation of Christian support of Zionism sidesteps several critical issues. First, it ignores the fact that many of Zionism's most vocal Christian supporters embrace fundamentally anti-Jewish theologies that turn Jews into pawns in an apocalyptic end-game.

Second, it sidesteps the question of whether Christians—as well as Jews—may have valid theological reasons for articulating a diasporic rather than nationalist establishment vision of the people of Israel.

Third, it does not adequately address the question of the Palestinians who were displaced by Zionism and who live under Zionist occupation. The authors make a gesture in this direction when they write that "Jewish tradition mandates justice for all non-Jews who reside in a Jewish state." This is hard to reconcile with the authors' claim that differences between Jews and Christians cannot be resolved by one group "exercising political power over the other." What would the reaction of the signatories to Dabru Emet be to a Christian political theology that promised "justice for all non-Christians who reside in a Christian state?" The statement also does not come to terms with the difficulty that the establishment of the "Jewish" state comes at the expense of the right of Palestinians to return to their homes. Neither does it disclose whether the authors support the establishment of a Palestinian state or permanent Israeli control over all of the land. Perhaps the authors were not in agreement on this point.

Dabru Emet appears to hold that Palestinian dispossession is not a necessary feature of Zionism. Perhaps one can argue theoretically that Palestinian dispossession (and thus injustice) is not an inevitable byproduct of Zionism; however, as a generation of new Israeli historians has conclusively shown, Palestinian dispossession has been part and parcel of the real history of Zionism.

For more than 50 years Mennonite Central Committee has been working with Zionism's victims and witnessing to ongoing Palestinian dispossession at Israeli hands. More recently Christian Peacemaker Teams has stood with Palestinians whose homes are under attack by Israeli settlers. The witness of MCC and CPT against Israeli injustice can only be strengthened if our supporting denominations are also actively concerned about combating anti-Judaism within Mennonite congregations. Let us give thanks for the gift of Dabru Emet and continue the conversation by responding in a spirit of repentance, humility and truth-telling.

The witness against Israeli injustice can only be strengthened if our supporting denominations are also actively concerned about combating anti-Judaism within Mennonite congregations.

Alain Epp-Weaver is co-country representative of Palestine for Mennonite Central Committee in Jerusalem.

Work builds Salvadoran community spirit

Post-hurricane projects bring together 'forgotten' people

SAN MARTIN, El Salvador—The community of La Linea, or The Line, takes its name from the abandoned railroad track that runs along the outskirts of San Martin. Shacks perch on the edges of deep ravines, and the residents' lives are as precarious as their homes, one storm away from a slide into disaster.

Before Hurricane Mitch two years ago, the community building was one more reminder of La Linea's problems. Vandals had destroyed the windows, and holes gaped in the roof.

But on Sept. 24, more than 300 people gathered in and around the newly repaired building to celebrate the completion of post-hurricane projects.

Funded by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and organized and carried out by the residents of La Linea, the projects included building retaining walls and a drainage system, in addition to repairing the community building. More significantly, the work brought together people who are ignored by most of Salvadoran society and divided by fear and mistrust among themselves.

MCC photo by Rachel Beth Miller

Residents of the Salvadoran community of La Linea inspect a retaining wall built following Hurricane Mitch's 1998 assault on Latin America. Mennonite Central Committee funded a series of post-hurricane projects in La Linea, a squatter community on the outskirts of San Martin.

Hurricane Mitch battered Central America in October 1998. But the storm's effects on La Linea were not as dramatic as the devastation in other parts of the region, says Byron Peachey, MCC El Salvador country co-representative. Instead, the solid week of rain exacerbated the chronic problem of narrow dirt roads washing out and crumbling into mud.

"This is sort of a forgotten community," Peachey says. "The people of La Linea get little attention from the municipality in terms of infrastructure or services, because most of them are technically squatters on the railroad company's land."

Driven off their land during El Salvador's 12-year civil war, poor Salvadorans drifted in to La Linea after the peace accords were signed in 1992.

"People who earn enough money to move elsewhere often leave La Linea, but few can," Peachey says. "For those who come and take their place, it's a step up from a cardboard shack or living crowded in someone else's house. Many people won't move on. For them, this is home."

In early 1999, Sam Nickels and Cindy Hunter, MCC volunteers in La Linea at the time, had the idea of organizing post-hurricane improvement projects. They approached Noel Larin and Bernarda Mendez, two leaders of the Baptist mission church that is MCC's partner in La Linea.

From the beginning, Larin and Mendez worked to give all residents a voice. They developed a planning commission with representatives from six neighborhoods, with equal numbers of men and women.

"People tend to be divided between who goes to which church, who belongs to which gang," Peachey says. "I'm quite sure [the commission] was made up of people who never would have had occasion to work together before."

The commission even had to overcome theological differences, as some churches in La Linea teach that any type of organizing for social improvement is a sin.

"There's a hymn that says, 'I want to walk on streets of gold with Jesus,' " Mendez says. "People sing that song, but they ignore their own streets that are crumbling."

With $35,000 from MCC, the commission agreed to complete six projects that would benefit the entire community, including building retaining walls, laying stone to reinforce dirt roads and creating a drainage system. All work would be volunteer labor, with the exception of a small sum paid to Larin to keep the books and coordinate purchases. Construction began in September 1999.

"Bernarda had also talked about how it was a shame that people who were rained out of their homes had no place to go," Peachey says. Every year when the rains come, someone's house is in danger."

So the community building was refurbished to serve as a shelter for displaced people. La Linea residents also use the building for community and church group meetings and as a clinic and medicine storage area.

The post-hurricane projects have been a step toward creating a sense of ownership, Peachey says. "La Linea is made up of people who've come from all over the country," he says. "Maybe the way people worked together was a statement of, 'We're all living here, we've got to learn how to work together and make this a community.' "—*Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service*

Stewardship educators come to the end of the road after seven years of volunteer travel and speaking

GOSHEN, Ind.—Countercultural. Radical. Alternative. Those were the words Dorothy and Orval Shank heard describing their work as they offered stewardship-related worship and education in congregations around the country.

"I was offended at first by these descriptions," Orval says. "That wasn't what we were trying to be."

Recently retired and now living in Penn Laird, Va., after seven years of volunteer work as traveling stewardship educators, they reflect on how the concept of stewardship has changed in Mennonite churches.

"What we focused on was the good news of Jesus in our stewardship message," Dorothy says. "It's a message of joy and thanksgiving. From that starting point, we could talk about how the theology of money practically applies to our lives."

Such a message was new for many people. "This was viewed as counterculture by some church members who were used to stewardship messages of guilt instead of joy," Orval says.

Adds Dorothy: "While our approach may have seemed radical to them, many people thanked us for not giving them a guilt trip. It helped people rethink how we manage all of our financial resources."

The Shanks served as stewardship ministers for Virginia Conference from 1985 to 1992 before hitting the road. For their stewardship tour, they traveled the country, pulling a travel trailer. They stopped in many remote regions, where congregations rarely see churchwide speakers face to face. The Shanks' work was mostly among General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Conservative Mennonite Conference congregations.

Dorothy and Orval Shank

The Shanks gave away these years as volunteers, feeling this was a period of Jubilee for them. Congregations were asked only to cover the costs of the Shanks' visits. For congregations unable to do so, Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) provided financial backing as needed.

The Shanks provided practical guidance on managing money at all stages of life, including youth. "Between the ages of 16 and 25, people form their spending patterns for life," Orval says. "We need to reach people at this age with messages about Christian stewardship in our materialistic world."

The Shanks say views of stewardship are changing. "Stewardship is no less utilitarian and obligation oriented," Orval says. "Now we are focusing on being generous firstfruits givers as a response to God's grace."

The Shanks' retirement does not mean the end of stewardship education in the church. MMA continues to provide stewardship-related worship and education resources, including the new Stewardship University, to be launched next month.—*MMA News Service*

District to withdraw from Virginia Conf.

As expected, the Cornerstone District of Virginia Conference has started the process of withdrawing its membership over the issue of homosexuality in the emerging Mennonite Church USA.

"We cannot in good conscience be part of a denomination that doesn't take a clear stand on an issue so clearly set forth in Scripture," says district overseer Gerald Martin.

In a letter to the Virginia Conference Council, the district requested that Cornerstone's departure be by mutual agreement and blessing, according to the proposed denominational membership guidelines for congregations who feel they cannot join Mennonite Church USA.

At its annual delegate assembly this summer, Virginia defeated a motion for the conference to not join the new denomination.

"Cornerstone has consistently and openly stated that unless there is a clear biblical stand taken on the issue of homosexuality, we would not be able to join the new Mennonite Church USA," Martin says. "We had hoped that the whole Virginia Conference would feel the same way."

Cornerstone has five congregations and about 1,000 members.

S. Andre Yoder Harris

Joined in song

Left to right: Planning committee members Magda Escobar, Betty Thompson, Monroe Yoder and Addie Banks sing "The Lord's Prayer" during the opening service of the 17th annual convention of the New York City Council of Mennonite Churches on Sept. 23. The gathering, held at Camp Deerpark, a Mennonite camp 90 miles from the city, drew more than 400 people. The council includes 17 metropolitan-area congregations.

Story of the Good Samaritan times four

MVS worker recounts saga of her arrival in Chicago

CHICAGO—Sometimes even a Good Samaritan needs a Good Samaritan—maybe more than one. It took four to help Susan Bernhart get from Midway Airport in Chicago to the Mennonite Voluntary Service Pilsen unit house when she started her MVS term a year ago.

Bernhart knew that no one would be able to meet her plane when she arrived. Although she was in an unfamiliar town and loaded down with three huge suitcases and a French horn, she was not concerned, she says. Bernhart thought that getting to her new home couldn't be any tougher than when she worked in a group home for profoundly disabled adults and took them on outings.

With only $8 in her pocket, not enough for a cab, Bernhart asked her first Good Samaritan, an airport security guard, where she should get off the El, Chicago's mass transit train. Racine and Loomis, she was told. But Bernhart got off one stop too early, where she and her three bags and French horn got stuck in an exit turnstile. She ended up on one side with the $2,000 horn on the other.

That's when Bernhart figured she needed a little help. Good Samaritan No. 2 answered her prayer, but he was a little leery. "[He] gave me a look like I was asking him to carry a bomb onto an airplane," she says, "but did as I asked."

When Bernhart reached the street and realized that she wasn't at Racine and Loomis, she needed a third Good Samaritan, a security guard who let her back into the El. One stop later, she learned the toughest part of her journey was still ahead. She was at the 600 South block of Racine, a couple of miles short of the unit house at 2000 South.

"Slowly I lugged, heaved and shoved my way to the 13th block, where there was a dark and ominous-looking tunnel under a bridge," she recalls. "A scruffy looking man with a bottle of beer emerged from under the bridge."

He was No. 4, proof that Good Samaritans come in many different packages.

"Hold this," he said, handing her the beer.

"Then before I could say a word, if I could think of a word, he picked up my rolling suitcase and the huge suitcase on top and lifted them both onto his head," Bernhart says.

On they trudged, the man with two suitcases on his head and the new MVS worker with a bottle of beer in one hand, a French horn over her shoulder, holding the third suitcase.

To show her gratitude when she arrived at the unit house, Bernhart gave the man the last money she had. He smiled, told her his name and "said with amused confidence that he was sure he'd be seeing me around, as if an insane novelty such as myself would be hard to miss."

That was a year ago, and Bernhart, whose MVS assignment is teaching computer literacy, is still waiting to run into him again.

"Jesus promises us umpteen times in the Bible that he will rescue us when we're in trouble," she says, "and many times he rescues us through the kindness of strangers."

But Bernhart adds, "Admittedly, I could have used a little better judgment that first day in Chicago." *—Harley Marshall for GCMC and MBM news services*

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Under arrest

Abby Nafziger, a junior at Bethany Christian Schools in Goshen, Ind., handcuffs fellow junior Zac Albrecht during a simulation of military occupation at the school on Oct. 16. Under the simulation, conducted by Christian Peacemaker Teams, a small number of the students were soldiers, while another group was granted "privileged" status. Both could exercise control over the majority of the student body. The simulation concluded with discussions of their experiences, including power and nonviolent responses to it.

Two honored by EMU alumni association

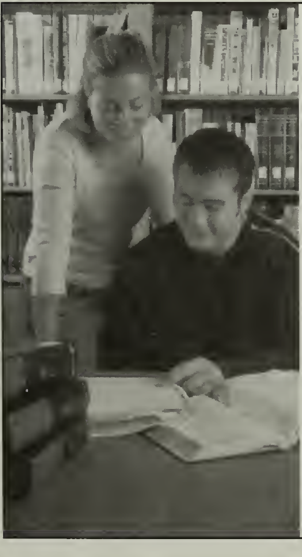
HARRISONBURG, Va.—One graduate is rural, the other urban. But they both have been honored for their work by the Alumni Association of Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg.

Henry E. Miller, class of 1970, is Alumnus of the Year, while Monroe J. Yoder, class of 1965, has been named winner of the Distinguished Christian Service Award. They received their awards on Oct. 15, during EMU's homecoming and parents weekend.

Miller, of Constantine, Mich., was cited for his work in agriculture, exhibiting concern for the environment. He has developed a crop-rotation system that reduces the need for chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

Yoder, of the Bronx, N.Y., is an adjunct professor in New York University's microscopy laboratory and holds a doctorate from the school. While pursuing his career in science, he has also pastored Seventh Avenue Mennonite Church in Harlem and has been bishop of Lancaster Conference's congregations in New York City since 1979. He retired from New York University in 1998 to devote more time to church work.

The Alumnus of the Year Award honors an EMU graduate who has made a major achievement in his or her profession. The Distinguished Christian Service Award honors alumni for their contributions to the church, community and EMU.



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by the way ...

Samuel K. Mosiman served the longest tenure as president of a Mennonite college, leading Bluffton (Ohio) College from 1910 to 1935.

Meat canner starts year with more workers

AKRON, Pa.—The Mennonite Central Committee portable meat canner departed MCC headquarters in Akron on Oct. 16 to start its 55th season, staffed for the first time with four operators instead of the usual three.

The fourth canner operator was added to help alleviate overtime hours. This year's operators are Alfredo Berg of Bagé, Brazil; Waldemar Berg of Bad Oeynhausen, Germany; Sam Dinius of Archbold, Ohio; and Benjamin Sander of St. Georgen, Germany.

The canner's first stop was Middlefield, Ohio. The canner will visit another 29 locations in 11 states plus two sites in Ontario by the end of the canning season in April. As many as 4,000 cans of beef, turkey, pork or broth will be canned each day.

Since the first canning season in 1945, an estimated 18 million pounds of meat have been canned.—*MCC News Service*

MDS, United Way collaborate in North Carolina

BURGAW, N.C.—More than a year after hurricane-spawned floods destroyed her house, Lucille Jordan has a new home, thanks to Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS) and the United Way.

MDS, which has been working in the Burgaw area since last November in the wake of Hurricane Floyd, had received a grant of $179,754 from the local United Way for building materials. Jordan's was the first house to be completed.

"As we come into your community, we want to work as closely as we can with your local government, with your faith groups and with your community development organizations," MDS executive coordinator Tom Smucker said at the Oct. 12 dedication of Jordan's house. "I cannot say enough about the United Way and their support in allowing us to use their dollars to build a home like this."

More than 500 workers have served at the Bergaw project, which is scheduled to continue until April 2001.—*MDS News Service*

Goshen academic dean to return to teaching

GOSHEN, Ind.—Paul Keim, Goshen College's academic dean since 1997, will return to the classroom full-time next fall as an associate professor of Bible, religion and philosophy. He will fill a position vacated by Don Blosser, who will retire next summer after 31 years on the Goshen faculty. A search committee for a new dean is being organized.

"We will really miss Paul in our President's Council meetings," says Goshen president Shirley H. Showalter, "but we are sure the students will be the real winners."

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Events

Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville, Wash., centennial celebration, Nov. 11-12. For information, contact the church at <menno@ritzcom.net>.

Workers

Friesen, Kevin, Henderson, Neb., has begun a three-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Nicaragua, working with community development.

Fry, Paul and Rosemary, Goshen, Ind., have begun a one-year Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) assignment at Corrymeela Knocklayd ecumenical retreat center in Ballymoney, Northern Ireland.

Gerber, Fran and Robert, have concluded four years of an MBM/Commission on Overseas Mission assignment in China.

Gerber, Lori and Nolan, have concluded a one-year MBM mission associate assignment in Chile.

Gingrich, Tara, Waterloo, Ont., has begun a one-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment as activities coordinator for Dolores Street Community Services in San Francisco.

Glick, Rochelle, Amston, Conn., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as community outreach assistant for the Humane Society of Boulder (Colo.) Valley.

Graber, Nichole, Palmer Lake, Colo., has begun a one-year MVS assignment with Habitat for Humanity in San Francisco.

Halteman, Megan, Wheaton, Ill., has begun a one-year MBM assignment as a research assistant for Evangelical Contribution on Northern Ireland in Belfast.

Harder, Elisabeth, Mountain Lake, Minn., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Washington, working as a legislative assistant for domestic affairs.

Hausrath, Elisabeth, Boise, Idaho, has begun a three-year MCC assignment in the Philippines, working as a writer.

Hochstetler, Heidi, Shickley, Neb., has begun a one-year MVS assignment with La Puente Homeless Services in Alamosa, Colo.

Hollinger-Janzen, Lynda and Rodney, have concluded 15 years with MBM in Benin.

Junne, Julia, Braunschweig, Germany, has begun a one-year MVS assignment with United Cerebral Palsy in Fresno, Calif.

Kreider, Alan and Eleanor, have concluded 26 years with MBM in England.

Linder, Maria, Sarasota, Fla., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., working as a writer and editor.

Martin, Jeff, Denver, Pa., has begun a one-year MCC assignment as an intern in Bolivia.

Miller, Rachel, Bellefontaine, Ohio, has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., working as a writer and editor.

Correction: Joe Spallinger was licensed as a youth pastor at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa. This announcement was incorrect in our Oct. 17 issue.

Births

Beiler, Kaitlyn Eng, Sept 7, to James and Keang (Kok) Beiler, Hazelton, Pa.

Epp, Alex Gregory, Sept. 3, to Dawn and Greg (Bever) Epp, Wichita, Kan.

Froese, Layci KaAnn, Oct. 2, to Bill and Kami (Schmidt) Froese, Canton, Kan.

Kennell, Dustin Lee, Oct. 11, to Bryant and Lisa Kennell, Eureka, Ill.

Longenecker, Garrett Andrew, Sept. 29, to Joe and Kelly (Miller) Longenecker, Indianapolis.

Miller, Logan Charles, Oct. 11, to Gerald and Lisa (Litwiller) Miller, Champaign, Ill.

Regehr, Grace Kubin, Sept. 14, to Christy Kubin and Rock Regehr, Inman, Kan.

Ries, Jillian Elizabeth, Sept. 9, to Charmaine (Mendel) and James Ries, Boulder, Colo.

Spicher, Ethan Todd, Sept. 28, to Jean (Leaman) and Jeff Spicher, Lancaster, Pa.

Vrolijk, Chad Todd, Oct. 6, to Linwood and Radella (Todd) Vrolijk, Hinton, Va.

Yutzy, Lauren Elizabeth, Oct. 4, to Jay and Rebecca (Edlind) Yutzy, Harrisonburg, Va.

Marriages

Blough/Livengood: Florence Blough, Hollsopple, Pa., and Guy Livengood, Springs, Pa., Oct. 8 at Springs.

Forry/Harnish: Adam Forry, Lancaster, Pa., and Kim Harnish, Lititz, Pa., Oct. 7 at Forest Hills Mennonite Church, Leola, Pa.

Giesbrecht/Ruth: Peter Giesbrecht, Menno Colony, Paraguay, and Tamara Ruth, Perkasie, Pa., Sept. 30 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Hostetler/Larrew: Trevor Hostetler, Portland, Ore., and Christina Larrew, Bend, Ore., Sept. 23 at Bend.

Hostetler/Miller: Justin Hostetler, Boswell, Pa., and Stacey Miller, Hollsopple, Pa., Sept. 9 at Benscreek Lutheran Church, Holsopple.

Lehman/McLean: Deanna Lehman, Boswell, Pa., and John McLean, Charleston, S.C., Oct. 7 at Stahl Mennonite Church, Johnstown, Pa.

Livengood/Pirolozzi: Valerie Livengood, Springs, Pa., and Keith Pirolozzi, Cumberland, Md., Sept. 16.

Pepper/Waltner: Donavan Pepper, Chicago, and Heidi Waltner, Freeman, S.D., Sept. 2 at Chicago.

Smith/Statler: Melissa Smith, Hollsopple, Pa., and Glenn Statler Jr., Windber, Pa., Sept. 16 at Stahl Mennonite Church, Johnstown, Pa.

Deaths

Baerg, Melvin, 64, Butterfield, Minn., died Sept. 25 of cancer. Spouse: Erna Mae Buller Baerg. Parents: Peter and Elizabeth Krahn Baerg (deceased). Other survivors: children Calvin, Devon, Berdon, Cheryl Hofmann, Diane; eight grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; three stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 30 at First Mennonite Church, Mountain Lake, Minn.

Beiler, Samuel, 83, Sarasota, Fla., died Sept. 12 of pneumonia. Spouse: Betty Beiler. Parents: Dan and Mary Beiler (deceased). Other survivors: children Myra Gingerich, Mark; five grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 15 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Haldeman, Grace Jantzi, 53, Lowville, N.Y., died Oct. 2 of cancer. Spouse: Clarence Haldeman. Parents: Mahlon and Ruth Ressler Jantzi. Other survivors: children David, Jonathan; two grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 5 at Croghan (N.Y.) Mennonite Church.

Hanson, Kenneth, 76, McPherson, Kan., died Sept. 4. Spouse: Grace Hanson. Other survivors: children Craig, Tamara; three grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 8 at First Mennonite Church, McPherson.

Kennel, Sylvia Lichti, 84, Geneva, Neb., died Sept. 27. Spouse: Harry Kennel (deceased). Parents: Nicholaus and Magdolena Rediger Lichti (deceased). Survivors: children Galen, Arla Rediger, Karen Soontag, Lana Sutton; eight grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren; three step-great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Sept. 30 at Salem Mennonite Church, Shickley, Neb.

King, John, 81, Sarasota, Fla., died Aug. 9 of cancer. Spouse: Lala King. Parents: Edward and Elizabeth Augsburger King (deceased). Other survivors: children Donna Yoder, Darrel, Joan Martin, Patti Brunk; 10 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Aug. 12 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Kuehn, Emma Bartel, 83, Archbold, Ohio, died Oct. 11. Spouse: Peter Kuehn. Parents: Julius and Wanda Bartel (deceased). Other survivors: children Erick, Karl; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 14 at Zion Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Landis, Sallie Halteman, 98, Lansdale, Pa., died Sept. 30. Spouse: John Landis (deceased). Parents: Henry and Alice Hagey Halteman (deceased). Survivors: children Grace, Verna Delp, Henry; eight grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 4 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Maust, Edward, 89, Sarasota, Fla., died Aug. 22. Spouse: Leta Maust. Parents: Joseph and Lydia Hostetler Maust (deceased). Other surviors: children Lorraine, Leslie; two grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 26 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Merk, Clifford, 77, Freeman, S.D., died Oct. 6. Spouse: Ardis Pankratz Merk (deceased). Parents: Dan and Francis Schragg Merk (deceased). Survivors: children James, Dennis, Douglas; four grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 9 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman, S.D.

Noon, Phyllis Miller, 62, Davidsville, Pa., died Sept. 13. Spouse: Leroy Noon. Parents: James and Myrtle Miller (deceased). Other survivors: children Mary Hillegass, Michael, Debra, Brenda Keleman; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 15 at Carpenter Park Mennonite Church, Davidsville.

Saylor, Audrey Livingston, 87, Davidsville, Pa., died Sept. 27. Spouse: Victor Saylor (deceased). Parents: Charles and Edith Livingston (deceased). Survivors: children Ruby Poole, Dennis, Malinda Lloyd. Funeral: Sept. 30 at Davidsville.

Sommers, Sanford, 76, Sarasota, Fla., died Sept. 6 of cancer. Spouse: Alta Sommers. Parents: Moses and Anna Yoder Sommers (deceased). Other survivors: children Ruthann Yoder, Becky Lederman, Rhoda Bailey, Linford, Gloria Schrock, Charlene Koehn, Joetta Raber; 19 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Sept. 11 at Bahia Vista Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Swope, Ruby Kiser, 91, Harrisonburg, Va., died Oct. 1. Spouse: Sem Swope (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Sallie Shank Kiser (deceased). Survivors: children Galen, Nelson, Edwin, Twila Showalter, Erma Blosser; 18 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct 4 at Weavers Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Waltner, Carroll, 77, Freeman, S.D., died Sept. 22 of a heart attack. Spouse: Esther Wedel Waltner. Parents: John and Bertha Waltner (deceased). Other survivor: daughter Jorgiann Glubka. Funeral: Sept. 25 at Salem Mennonite Church, Freeman.

classifieds

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

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- **Wooster Mennonite Church** is seeking a half-time ***youth pastor***. Candidates must have a strong commitment to Christ and to Anabaptist beliefs, as well as an excitement to see young people follow Christ. For more information, please contact or send resume to Wooster Mennonite Church, 1563 Beall Ave., Wooster, OH 44691; email <WoosterMC@sssnet.com>.

- **The Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba** is inviting nominations and applications for the full-time position of ***evangelism and service director***. Responsibilities include the creative development of new ministry areas and opportunities (in cooperation with CMM congregations and other related organizations), with close ties to CMM camping and media ministries. Qualifications: a mature commitment to Jesus Christ; agreement with the Mennonite Confession of Faith and membership in the Mennonite Church; seminary training desired, preferably at a Mennonite school; congregational or other church-related experience; ability to lead an emerging, many-faceted ministry; willingness to work in a collegial manner with other staff members, congregations and related organizations. Salary and benefits follow CMM guidelines. Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.

  Please address submissions in confidence to Victor Kliewer, CMM Executive Director, 200-600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 2J1; 204-896-1616; fax 204-832-7804; email <vkliewer@confmenn.mb.ca>.

- **Zook 3D painting** for sale. The piece is titled ***"MCC Canning."*** Call 717-898-8787 or email <kcampbell@redrose.net> for more information.

- **Spruce Lake Fellowship**, a Franconia Conference Mennonite church in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pa., seeks a Mennonite ***pastor or couple*** to serve in a VS capacity for a one-year term. Housing, meals, health care and monthly stipend provided. Est. 20-25 hrs/wk. Assignment to begin ASAP. Contact Joy Kauffman, 570-595-7505. Send resume with references to Pastoral Search Committee, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** seeks a full-time ***executive director***. Responsibilities include vision and passion for the ministry, leadership skills, interest and experience in development and spiritual maturity. Please send a letter of application and resume by Nov. 30, 2000, to Gloria Horst Rosenberger, Association President, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Rt. 5 Box 145, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666-8908. For more information on Laurelville: <www.laurelville.org>.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***youth pastor*** who will join the current pastoral team. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. Located in southeastern Pa., Montgomery County, Franconia has an exciting and growing jr. and sr. high youth program. Interested people should send their resume to Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email <info@franconiamennonite.org>.

- **Anabaptist and Brethren Agency**, Lancaster, Pa., a general agency servicing property mutual aid service providers across the country, is seeking an ***underwriter/CSR*** for a full-time salaried position. We have preference for insurance agency experience, current P/C license and strong analytical, communication and computer skills. We will consider appropriate experience in lieu of some of these requirements. We offer an exceptional working environment, salary and benefits commensurate with your skills. Please forward letter of interest and resume to Anabaptist and Brethren Agency, P.O. Box 5364, Lancaster, PA 17606-5364; fax 717-509-4549.

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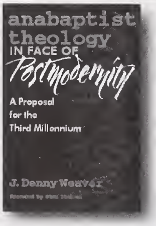

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The martyrdom of innocence

by Anita Fast

The stories of firebombs, bullets, rocks and injuries in Israel's West Bank fill the newspapers. Live ammunition replaces rubber-coated bullets. Officials and civilians alike are quick to say that things have rarely been this bad. But there are stories that continue to go unheard. Stories of regular people who don't want to go out and join the violent struggle but who get caught in the cross fire nonetheless. They have not been walking in the streets and chosen the wrong alleyways. They have not even left their homes. In fact, they cannot leave their homes.

Unlike in Palestinian-controlled cities such as Bethlehem and Ramallah, where clashes happen on the borders and people who wish to remain uninvolved in the violence can usually make that choice, for many in Hebron the story is different. Because of the Jewish settlers in the heart of the Old City and the 1,500 Israeli soldiers stationed here to protect them, the scene looks different. The 35,000 Palestinian residents of the Israeli-occupied part of Hebron, called H2, are under 24-hour-a-day curfew. For some families living in H2, only blocks away from our Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) apartment, their lives are under siege.

On Oct. 4, with Palestinian journalist Kawther Salam and fellow CPT worker Andrew Getman, I visited two families whose rooftops have become strategic military outposts. Approaching the first, I felt as if I were coming upon a deserted home. The windows were boarded up with wood and tin. Broken bottles and rocks littered the walkway. Black evidence of fires streaked the walls. But there were some differences. A face peered out from inside an enclosed bunker, and a deep voice shouted, "Go away! Get out of here!"

It was a soldier. We ignored his warnings and knocked on the door. The door opened, and a young father stood inside, holding a 4-month-old girl. Four other children, all boys under the age of 12, gathered around him. They invited us in. We smelled gas in the dimly lit rooms, which had all light and ventilation extinguished due to the boarded-up windows. One of the boys opened the door to their nicely furnished sitting room. Rocks littered the floor, and a burned-out bottle lay shattered on the charred carpet. The 4-year-old held the curtains away from the windows and pointed. The glass was shattered and sharp shards covered the floor.

The father, Jihad Sede Ahmad, told his story. The previous afternoon a clash started in their area. Because of the soldiers stationed on their roof, their home became the target for stone- and molotov-cocktail-throwing Palestinians. Jewish settlers threw the same from the other side. The soldiers shot back. Inside, the children screamed, the baby cried and they all hid inside the bathroom. That night the children wanted to sleep under their parents' bed.

Next door stands the beautiful home of Dr. Taisir Zahdeh. The previous night soldiers invaded his home. They wanted to use his roof for another shooting post. The doctor and his wife told us that three days earlier some soldiers came knocking at the door. They wanted in, but the doctor refused. The soldiers smashed the window of the door and started yelling, demanding that they be given entry. The doctor still refused. The next night he awoke to hammering on his metal door. He went to investigate, only to find that the soldiers had returned and were trying to break down the door. Some settlers from Beit Haddasseh settlement were helping.

Taisir, remembering how his resistance to soldier's requests in 1998 resulted in his being beaten into a coma, told the soldiers he would let them in. But when he tried his key, the lock was already too damaged. The soldiers and settlers continued beating and prying at the door. An hour later, they succeeded in opening it. Once on his roof, they drilled holes in the wall of the roof so that they could be hidden while watching and shooting through the holes. Day and night, there are soldiers going up and down the stairs, disturbing the family's sleep and frightening his four children, who scream in fear.

Taisir recalls the horrors of having soldiers on his roof several years ago. They urinated and threw bags full of their feces over the edge of the roof onto the heads of people coming to visit. They made lots of noise and carried dirt through the house. They went to the bathroom down the pipes that carried water from the roof for the family to use. Now that the soldiers are back on their roof, he and his wife fear these things will start again.

These are the civilian casualties that do not get recorded. These are the bodies that don't have visible scars. These are the lives that carry the cost of military occupation in memories and nightmares of degradation and horror. There is no glory in the martyrdom of innocence for these children. And in the words of Taisir, "There is no end to the stories that could be told."

These are the civilian casualties that do not get recorded. These are the bodies that don't have visible scars. These are the lives that carry the cost of military occupation in memories and nightmares of degradation and horror.

Anita Fast is a Christian Peacemaker Teams worker in Hebron. She wrote this piece on Oct. 4.

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Gordon Houser

The good, the bad and the beautiful

One thing I asked of the Lord …
to behold the beauty of the Lord.—Psalm 27:4

We all have our good days and our bad days, our ups and downs. We laugh at times, we cry at others. But most days are relatively mundane, filled with routine activities.

We need clear sight and sharpened spiritual senses to see the presence of God in all three: the good, the bad and the mundane. Then we may find beauty in all things.

In Scripture we find the spectrum of experience. For example, Moses leads his people out of their oppressive slavery in Egypt, through the Red Sea. It's a glorious victory by Yahweh, and the people dance and sing (Exodus 15).

Then they find themselves in the wilderness, and they complain for lack of food and wish they were back in Egypt (Numbers 11).

We aren't much better. We're happy and content when things are going well, but we easily become bitter and resentful if events go against us. It's difficult to be like the apostle Paul, who learned to be content whether he had little or much (Philippians 4:11-12). It's difficult for us to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

We are called "to behold the beauty of the Lord," to see God everywhere, in all our experiences, to give thanks in our mourning as well as in our rejoicing.

Several weeks ago, a woman in my congregation asked for prayer because she felt the need to resign from her job, even though she didn't have another job in hand. The next week she shared that two days after she resigned, she was offered another position. And on top of that, she and her husband are expecting a child.

After the worship service, she told me, almost apologetically, "Last week I was crying, and this week I'm happy."

I said, "It's all part of a beautiful pattern."

While one couple in our congregation recently gave birth to a daughter, another couple suffered the anguish of a miscarriage.

How do we embrace both experiences in our prayers and our worship? Can we see that God is present in both? We don't believe that God somehow causes both good and bad. Rather we believe that God is present with us in all circumstances, which is why we can give thanks, even when we may not feel like it.

In his book *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes: Exploring Desert and Mountain Spirituality* (Oxford University Press, 1998), Belden C. Lane discusses two mountains in Scripture: Sinai and Tabor.

Moses met with God on Mount Sinai, which was covered with a cloud. "The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai" and "was like a devouring fire on top of the mountain" (Exodus 24:16,17).

For Lane, who climbed what is thought to be Mount Sinai, the mountain was "a place of being emptied, a place of dark and difficult beauty."

While Mount Sinai sits in a desolate wilderness, Mount Tabor rises farther north in the fertile Galilee. According to tradition, this is where Jesus took three of his followers and "was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white" (Matthew 17:2).

Early church fathers describe this "light of Tabor" as the divine light that is present in creation but often hidden from our sight.

In Christian tradition, writes Lane, Sinai is where "God is discovered in a sparcity of images," while Tabor is where "God is found in a sharpness and lucidity of image."

A third important mountain in the Bible is Mount Zion, "beautiful in elevation" (Psalm 48:2a). It is the city of the great king, the place where God dwells.

Yet "the earth is the Lord's" (Psalm 24:1). God is not limited to one place. God dwells in the thick darkness of Sinai, in the dazzling light of Tabor and on majestic Zion. God is present in hard times, the dark experiences we face, as well as in the happy times, when God's goodness is clear to us.

We are called to "behold the beauty of the Lord," to see God everywhere, in all our experiences, to give thanks in our mourning as well as in our rejoicing.—*gh*

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the Mennonite

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understanding postmodernism

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Palestinian clarifications

As someone who worked for most of 1995 and 1996 with Christian Peacemaker Teams in Hebron, West Bank, and as the current publications manager at the Washington-based Center for Policy Analysis on Palestine, the recent Middle East violence has weighed heavily on me. Both Palestinians and Israelis have experienced a great deal of sorrow. Therefore, it was a relief to read that Mennonite Central Committee donated $20,000 for medical supplies in Israel/Palestine ("MCC Provides $20,000 for Medical Supplies as Israeli-Palestinian Clashes Injure 2,000," Oct. 17). Yet I was concerned by the incomplete information in the article about this donation.

The article states that Muslims "hold [Ariel] Sharon responsible for the massacre of Palestinian refugees in two camps during Israel's 1982 war in Lebanon" and consider his visit to the Noble Sanctuary "a provocation." Not only Muslims, but all Palestinians hold Sharon responsible. In fact, even an Israeli government inquiry into the matter found Sharon indirectly responsible for this atrocity. Moreover, the article refers to "several children" being killed in the uprising. With the death rate at more than 100—mostly Palestinian—and with the rate of Palestinian children killed by Israeli soldiers at about 25 percent of this number, more than "several" children have been killed.

Finally, I think it also must be said that although Sharon's visit set off the unrest, one must also look at the overwhelming frustration Palestinians feel considering how little they have gained from the "peace process" and the role their hopelessness has played in sparking this uprising. Since Israeli-Palestinian negotiations began, Palestinian real per capita gross domestic product has declined by 20 percent, even though $3 billion of foreign aid has come in. Israel continues to demolish Palestinians' homes, confiscate their land, expand Israeli settlements and carve up any possible state with bypass roads. I recognize that there is limited space to go into much detail, but these clarifications are important.—*Wendy Lehman, Washington, D.C.*

More-with-less health care

Karl Shelly highlighted the ongoing exclusion of 44 million uninsured Americans from affordable health care (Speaking Out, Oct. 3). For the most part, the U.S. medical system has passed the buck to the government, and we in the church have similarly been content to draft resolutions. As a church, we should be working seriously with this injustice, both as it relates to the uninsured around and among us and as the spiritual issue it represents for health-care professionals.

We U.S. Mennonites need to do a lot more coloring outside the lines in response to unjust health-care access in our own communities. When facing other needs in our world, rather than simply throwing money at problems, Mennonites have historically favored "people" solutions. We should be no less willing to use our hands-on health-care resources to address the immediate needs of the uninsured around us. What if each local body of believers with access to health professionals were to develop a local community-based solution, simple in concept, creatively finding ways to deliver low-cost health care in a more-with-less model?

As a participant in one such alternative, I know for a fact that uninsured people can be reached with primary health care at a cost that is affordable on their limited budgets. This can occur without large cash infusions by outside donors or grants. While such an effort certainly requires the vision of committed health professionals, it is most effective if it includes a variety of contributions and gifts from others in the church and community.

As long as we have poor around us who do not feel free to get basic health care while we as a church and as individuals hold these very tools in our hands, there is a basic dilemma which we must address. Shelly states, "If we have a different vision to offer the world, we need to live it—not just lobby for it." I couldn't agree more.—*Merlin Friesen, Paoli, Ind.*

Political considerations

Joel Kauffmann's Pontius' Puddle in the Oct. 10 issue makes a powerful political and religious statement. The TV political ad in the comic strip promises to "return our country to the principles of Scripture" by reducing taxes for the rich, cutting social programs for the poor, enforcing harsher penalties for offenders and creating greater weapons of mass destruction.

We as Mennonites have the opportunity to not only pray for our leaders in government but also to cast an intelligent vote in favor of those politicians who are more in harmony with Christian values. As we look at the platforms of the leading candidates for political office, which of them portray humane Christian values to a greater degree than those listed in Kauffmann's comic? Do we really find our best

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readers say

choices for Christian values in voter guidelines such as from the Christian Coalition, or do we need to look to our Anabaptist heritage and its scriptural emphasis on promoting justice, mercy and peace for all people?—*Edwin G. Moyer, Quakertown, Pa.*

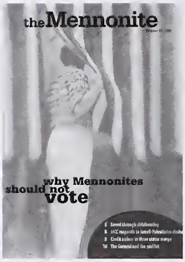
Why do we advocate capital punishment for unborn babies? Didn't Jesus direct some of his strongest words to his disciples when they rebuked those trying to get children blessed by him? In Matthew 19:14, Jesus told the disciples to "leave them alone" (Amplified Bible).

We as believers don't need this crime on our conscience, and unbelievers don't need this added blood on their souls. We can knowingly vote for the presidential candidate who would be less likely to treat the unborn that way.—*Willard A. Epp, Newton, Kan.*

Judge not

I am responding to the letter by Ryan Ahlgrim concerning the two districts that are withdrawing from the denomination (Readers Say, Oct. 10). I hear Ahlgrim questioning whether Cornerstone and Hopewell are being mutually accountable to the denomination by withdrawing. When reading about their withdrawals, I was overwhelmed with sadness. I felt that we (those looking to integrate) had failed these two districts. I felt that maybe we had been the arrogant people in the process. I felt that maybe we had not listened well enough. I felt we had not been mutually discerning with these two districts. It is dangerous, I believe, to describe people, congregations or conferences who decide not to be part of the integration process as somehow unfaithful. It will always be, for me, a time of great sadness when someone leaves the integration process, but we cannot close the way by judging them as unfaithful.—*Fred Redekop, Floradale, Ont.*

Cover photo by Jon Warren



It may be appropriate in this election year to at least consider why one might abstain from voting—not out of apathy but as a positive witness to the Christian faith.

—John D. Roth, "The Rites and Rights of Voting," Oct. 17, 2000

To vote or not to vote?

I find it surprising that a history professor would urge readers not to vote ("The Rites and Rights of Voting" by John D. Roth, Oct. 17). For women and African-Americans in this country, the right to vote came only after a long struggle. It's difficult to believe that anyone who is part of a group once denied that right would willingly give it up again. I think we as citizens and Mennonites have the responsibility to exercise our right to vote knowledgeably and in keeping with our faith.

I also believe we can be just as accountable for inaction as we are for our actions. Suppose we lived in Yugoslavia. Would Roth say we should have taken no action to vote for a leader to replace the genocide-bent Milosevic? Should Mennonites in South Africa not have attempted to end the evil system of apartheid through the democratic process?

In addition, I find at least two other of Roth's suggestions ill-advised. First is the idea that all Christians, or at least Mennonites, should vote the same way. Obviously believers can disagree about which candidate best expresses their understanding of faith. I'd hate to think I was obligated to vote the same way as Jerry Falwell or Pat Robertson. Second, Roth implies that pacifists cannot support Al Gore's defense of abortion rights. I disagree. It is possible to be personally opposed to abortion and yet hold the belief that it is a moral decision to be made by individuals and not by the government. *—Tina Eshleman, Richmond, Va.*

I think some third-party candidates fit "Mennonite values" better than the two candidates Roth mentioned. For example, Ralph Nader opposes the death penalty and the arms race and supports universal health care, environmental protection and economic justice. Some Mennonites may want to go a step further. I wonder what would happen if all the Mennonites in battleground states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania wrote in Menno Simons on their ballots. Granted he is neither a U.S. citizen nor alive, but it would send a different message than not voting at all.*—Chris Kennel, Indianapolis*

While it is true that we are part of a higher kingdom, God also made us part of this world and gave us a way to influence for good in a nonviolent way: voting. Paul used his Roman citizenship unabashedly (Acts 22:22-29); we should use our U.S. citizenship as well. Jesus said we should pay taxes. Surely voting for peace is more Mennonite than helping finance our military.

If Roth really believes there is "dubious" distinction between Bush and Gore, he is sadly uninformed. Gore supports the murder of 1.3 million unborn children per year, while Bush simply lets capital punishment judgments take effect. By the way, both Gore and Bush support capital punishment.

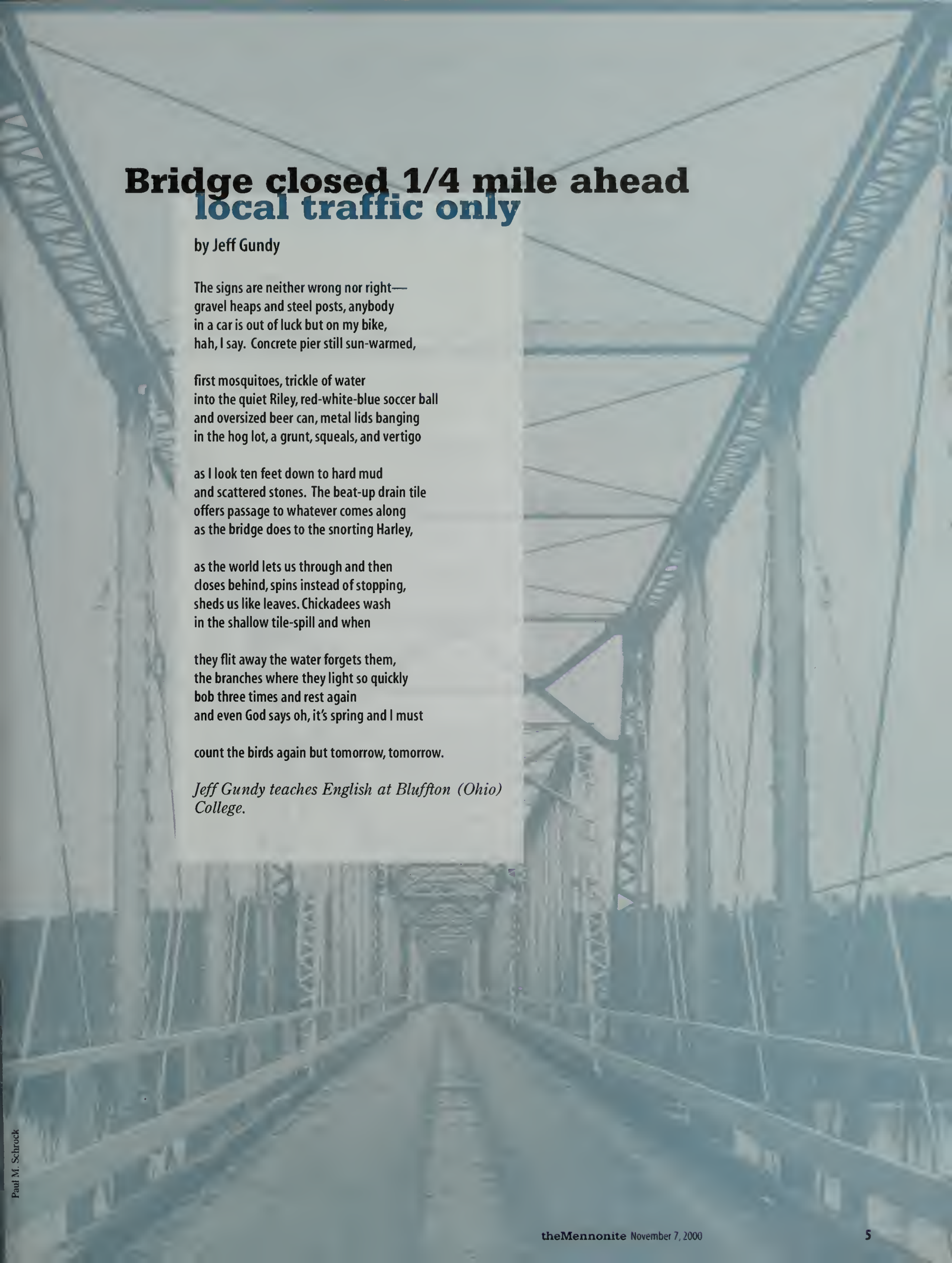
Sometimes we forget how richly God has blessed us with a freedom that we cannot take for granted. In a government by the people, it is our civic duty to know the facts and vote, just as it is our duty to render unto Caesar what is Caesar's.*—Eric Miller, Thornton, Colo.*

Daniel 4:17 indicates that even Old Testament rulers were chosen within the will of God. Can we not assume that rulers are still being selected or even more so within the will of the Most High in times of democracy? So the Heavenly Father is at work when citizens of a country are the channel through which the Most High is doing his function of ruler selecting. Then it would seem that the children of the Heavenly Father are refraining from participating in one of the Heavenly Father's great tasks. Of course, God doesn't have perfect candidates to place before the electorate. This is as true as the fact that he lacks perfect people to invite into his selection process. If we were to ask, "What would Jesus do?" he would be concerned for the outcome that favors most of those marginal people of society with whom he identified so much in his ministry*—Paul H. Martin, Des Moines, Iowa*

By voting, my pacifistic convictions are given an opportunity to be practically and relevantly expressed. Casting a vote represents a responsible action and a hopeful testimony that life can be altered in the present, though world problems cannot be completely resolved through this action. I live in the United States and, inevitably, am contaminated by its imperfections. This reality does not preclude my conscience to act responsibly in ambiguity. *—Sylvia Albrecht Aschliman, Chicago*

To decry voting as individualistic is anachronistic and inconsistent. I don't hear any calls from the pulpit to have a communal understanding about whether to own a car, what type of house to own, what type of mutual fund to invest in or other practical matters of daily living.*—Dave Hockman-Wert, Huntingdon, Pa.*

All of Roth's statements cry out for discussion and challenge, but they are made irrelevant by one simple point: Is there any method for changing the government more pacifistic than voting?*—Melvin D. Schmidt, Hyattsville, Md.*



Paul M. Schrock

Bridge closed 1/4 mile ahead local traffic only

by Jeff Gundy

The signs are neither wrong nor right—
gravel heaps and steel posts, anybody
in a car is out of luck but on my bike,
hah, I say. Concrete pier still sun-warmed,

first mosquitoes, trickle of water
into the quiet Riley, red-white-blue soccer ball
and oversized beer can, metal lids banging
in the hog lot, a grunt, squeals, and vertigo

as I look ten feet down to hard mud
and scattered stones. The beat-up drain tile
offers passage to whatever comes along
as the bridge does to the snorting Harley,

as the world lets us through and then
closes behind, spins instead of stopping,
sheds us like leaves. Chickadees wash
in the shallow tile-spill and when

they flit away the water forgets them,
the branches where they light so quickly
bob three times and rest again
and even God says oh, it's spring and I must

count the birds again but tomorrow, tomorrow.

Jeff Gundy teaches English at Bluffton (Ohio) College.

The promise and peril of postmodernism

We must understand and learn how to respond to this trend.

by Ted Lewis

Public apologies for violence in the past are spreading. Why now? The year 2000 is well-suited for Jubilee moments of forgiveness. But the deeper answer lies in a current trend that views history from the standpoint of victims: postmodernism. This term has not filtered out of academic circles very well. But because the fruit of postmodernism has been reaching the streets throughout the 1990s, it's important to understand it.

Architects were among the first to use the term "postmodern." After the 1970s, the futuristic modern look gave way to retro-buildings based on older styles. Yesterday upstaged tomorrow. Postmodernism includes a renewed interest in the past.

As a style, modernism suggests a sci-fi look, but as a worldview it stems from the 1500s, when science flourished and explorations gave Europe an eye to the future. I like to simplify modern thought with one word: progress. In the 1700s, America became the testing ground for progress. The sky was the limit.

Jesus modeled postmodernism's strengths. He crossed boundaries of exclusion. He sided with scapegoats. He debunked knowledge as a weapon.

The optimism of the 1800s, however, crumbled under the violent 1900s. Still, the momentum of progress brought unprecedented technological growth. The 1950s represented for many a golden era of prosperity and peace. "Remember! At General Electric, progress is our most important product," said TV host Ronald Reagan in 1955.

By the 1960s, modernism's peak was showing cracks. Peace and prosperity were seen as gold-leaf veneer; a new generation recognized the shameful price for obtaining such gold. Western history became a story of victimization. And voiceless groups found their voice.

Consider Columbus Day. This holiday used to celebrate westward expansion. But with a postmodern view of history, read from the bottom up, many feel shame for the extermination of native peoples. In 1992, I stood by the Black Hills' gold mine, mourning the losses for Native Americans.

With this heightened sensitivity to victims (including the earth itself), postmodern philosophers said that the texts of modernism held a hidden agenda of power to repress certain groups. Since the 1970s, unsurprisingly, university programs have included women's studies and African-American studies, for example, studies that modernism excluded.

Much good came out of modernism, such as polio vaccines. But as a belief system, modernism was a Tower of Babel built by the language of power. This project, which increasingly left God out, was costly, sacrificing those who stood in the way. Progress always had a dark side, but with postmodernism, people stopped believing in progress.

Culture war: Communism's demise involved this loss of belief. Balkanization liberated long-marginalized traditions, but once old authorities dissolved, tribalization triggered raw violence, as in Yugoslavia. Our own culture war between conservatives and liberals—with its polarizing rhetoric—fits this trend.

In the West, the Tower of Babel still stands. Modernism's offspring—technology and market economy—are alive and well. Postmodernism is simply modernism in crisis. This is an era when languages have multiplied, creating cultural confusion. People feel ambivalent about the past. Tower builders don't trust the blueprints. Our obsession with progress has turned inward: We are now obsessed with individual progress toward self-fulfillment.

Meanwhile, communications and globalization have skyrocketed. The decentralized Internet reflects and shapes postmodern society. Mass media, with diverse, noncommittal imagery, is tailor-made for our time. While we export media (my brother has seen satellite dishes in Borneo), the plurality of cultures enters our living rooms. Moreover, global interaction increasingly brings us face-to-face with a greater mix of people.

The good news is that we can rub shoulders with many traditions. Pentecost reminds us that God delights in diversity. Pentecost reversed the Tower of Babel's demise. God demonstrated that true unity doesn't erase cultural differences.

Consider the multicultural church plant sponsored by Peace Mennonite Church in Dallas, Texas. Pastor Dick Davis envisions how the church can show a glimpse of God's future kingdom, where every tribe joins together without melting-pot assimilation.

The bad news is that we can be overwhelmed by the vast smorgasbord of voices. Plus, how does one decide what is true? Postmodern philosophy not only "deconstructs" modernism's voice, it critiques all voices. Is it possible to trust any tradition if all truth claims are just deodorants covering the smell of self-interest?

In this setting, biblical truth is just one dish beside others; truth is what you serve for yourself. An ad for Esprit sums it up: "How you feel is important. What you believe is important. What's important is up to you." Here is postmodernism's weakness: Everything comes under suspicion; thus everything boils down to individual interpretation.

I met a Jewish-Catholic couple that broke ties with their religions. But like millions of unchurched adults, they are spiritually thirsty. After attending a solstice celebration with their baby, they asked, "Is this what we want to pass on to her?"

With the benefit of access to diverse traditions comes the burden of disorientation. And while it's good to disarm truth claims that have kept people voiceless, we are left with the burden of piecing together our own truth. While many of us may not experience these postmodern blessings or curses, we need to remember that many people do.

Promise and peril: To be mission-minded means we cannot ignore these issues. Also, our churchgoing youth bring postmodernity to us. Their lives are formed by global interaction, media intensification and suspicion of tradition. Our era holds both promise and peril for us in the church. We can be thankful in two areas, but in each we face challenges.

We can be thankful for rootedness. In today's pick-and-choose world, our heritage is priceless. Dennis Koehn, a draft resister who went to prison in the 1970s, told a woman he was supported by a 450-year-old tradition. "Wow," she said. "I've never met anyone like you before."

We are also rooted in the Bible, our navigational guide. The Bible, uniquely full of social critiques, resonates with postmodernism. But while it debunks the fruit of human pride, it adds a powerful message of hope.

Thankfully, Jesus is not one myth among others to choose from. The gospel itself dispels all that is corrupt in human myths and reflects all that is noble in them. Though suspicious of doctrine, postmodern folk are interested in Jesus. We have a pivotal opportunity to help those who want a constant North Star.

Our challenge is to not be threatened by pluralism. Pluralism is neither chaos nor relativism. It's a social fact, as in Roman society. We don't have to be like musk oxen that encircle their young, facing defensive horns outward. Such tribalism breeds an inward Christian subculture ill-equipped to engage society.

We don't have to be cultural chameleons. This can happen when we campaign for postmodernity's only absolute: tolerance. On one level, tolerance is a biblical virtue, suggesting civility and respect for those with whom we disagree. "But there is another tolerance today," writes author Richard Rohr, "where there are no boundaries worth protecting. This tolerance … creates little that lasts and is characteristic of much progressive thought."

If tolerance means accepting all differences as equally valid, then Jesus was not big on tolerance; he was big on love. He showed dignity to those who were stigmatized, and he freed people to pursue lives of healing. In today's polarizing culture war, I believe Jesus would look for third-way solutions, as he did with the woman caught in adultery (John 8).

We can also be thankful for victim sensitivity. Persecutions against Mennonites have allowed us to help others marginalized by myths of power. Those myths veiled the human face of victims. But finally, says Gil Bailie, author of *Violence Unveiled*, violence can no longer be justified. Mennonites have understood this.

Jesus modeled postmodernism's strengths. He crossed boundaries of exclusion. He sided with scapegoats. He debunked knowledge as a weapon. His Jubilee ministry led to execution, which to Caiaphas was a classic case of redemptive violence. But as an innocent victim, his death and resurrection exposed the sham of all traditions legitimizing violent means.

Our challenge is to let this victim-awareness broaden our ministries. We have much to give. But our greater challenge is to be better receivers. We can send relief and mission workers abroad, but can we hear what Third World Mennonites would say to us?

Two Mennonite pastors—one from Canada, one from India—offer a fresh look. During an exchange visit they learned about each other's congregations. The Canadian said, "My congregation is looking for direction amid our materialism."

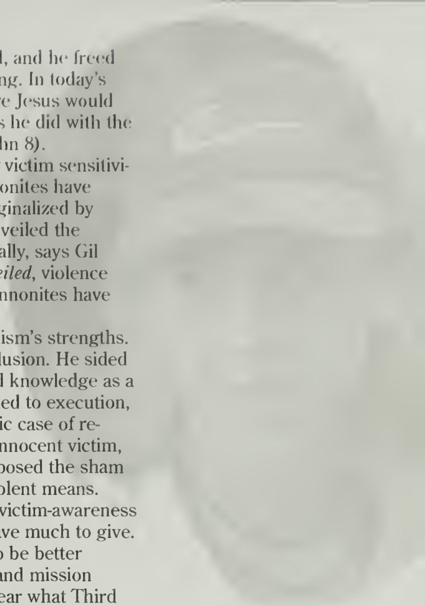
"North Americans," said the Indian pastor, "are materially blessed but not spiritually involved." Indian Mennonites can offer great spiritual resources.

Postmodern humility can widen our hearts to receive from our spiritually rich sisters and brothers. At the same time, we can know that postmodern philosophy has cracks, especially as it devalues rootedness in a tradition making claims about truth and morality.

Postmodernism, as a social fact, is something we can't escape. Many of us reflect the times with our mix of geographic, ethnic and spiritual backgrounds. At the same time, we can go against today's relativistic mood by standing sure-footed in our faith.

We can follow Jesus without embarrassment. This can be difficult when people are not sure who they are in relation to older traditions. Postmodernism questions a person's identity; it casts suspicion over how one thinks about power, the past and the future.

But Jesus, "knowing that God was his source of power, that he came from God and was returning to God," stripped off his clothing and washed his disciples' feet (John 13:3-5). His identity in God was so secure it freed him to serve others in a life-giving way. Now that's powerful knowledge.


Jon Warren

Books on postmodernism

- *Truth Is Stranger Than It Used to Be* by Brian Walsh and Richard Middleton (InterVarsity Press, 1995)
- *A Peculiar People* by Rodney Clapp (InterVarsity Press, 1996)
- *Is It A Lost Cause?* by Marva Dawn (Eerdmans, 1997)
- *Chameleon Christianity* by Dick Keyes (Baker Books, 1999)
- *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* by Leslie Newbigin (Eerdmans, 1989)

Ted Lewis lives in Eugene, Ore.

difficult texts of the Bible

Turn the other cheek.—Matthew 5:39

Strike all my enemies on the cheek.—Psalm 3:7

In the presence of my enemy

Fifth in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by J. Daryl Byler

The young Iraqi barber cut meticulously, scissoring through each section of my scalp so as not to miss a stray hair. The late-afternoon Baghdad sunshine shone through the barbershop windows on Saddoon Street and bounced off the mirrors as the youthful Iraqi pulled out a long straight razor to shave my neck. The sharp steel glistened in the sunlight.

Our Mennonite Central Committee delegation was in Iraq to review the impact of U.N.-imposed economic sanctions. At that moment, my country was threatening to bomb my barber's homeland. I wondered what was going through his mind. He was only 20-something.

In many ways our enemies are those who threaten our physical or psychological sense of security and well-being. They evoke in us feelings of fear, anxiety or hate.

For nearly half his life, my country had contributed to his hardship with a decade of bombing and sanctions.

Maybe getting a haircut in Baghdad wasn't a good idea, I thought. But in every way, my barber treated his enemy with kindness and respect. Am I as gracious with my enemies when there is an opportunity for payback?

Who are our enemies? The neighbor who plays loud music at night? Those who believe differently from us? Those who refuse to affirm us? Those who intimidate us? Those who actively oppose us?

In many ways our enemies are those who threaten our physical or psychological sense of security and well-being. They are those who evoke in us feelings of fear, anxiety or hate.

I spend time brooding about my enemies. I take some comfort in the fact that the psalmist also seems to dwell on his enemies. Indeed, the Psalms are filled with references to enemies, sometimes with harsh thoughts.

While Jesus asks us to "turn the other cheek" (Matthew 5:39), David asks God to "strike all my enemies on the cheek" (Psalm 3:7). David also asks God to destroy his enemies (Psalm 143:12), to repay them (Psalm 54:5) and put them to shame (Psalm 6:10).

Was David simply venting steam? Or do we attribute his ravings to a pre-enlightened era? Perhaps. But what is more striking than David's wish that evil befall his enemies is his consistent willingness to release his enemies to the providence of God's just care. When given the opportunity for revenge on Saul (1 Samuel 24 and 26) or Saul's family (2 Samuel 9) or Absalom (2 Samuel 18:5), David refuses to take matters into his own hands.

Instead he appeals to God's righteous judgment (Psalm 7:6, 9:4). He seeks God's guidance (Psalm 5:8). He trusts God to deliver him from enemies (Psalm 18:3,18; 31:15; 59:1; 69:14; 138:7; 143:9).

Still, Jesus asks us to go a step further than simply releasing our enemies to God's just care. Jesus asks us to join God in loving our enemies. But why?

The way of the world: For months an advertisement from defense contractor Lockheed Martin confronted me every morning when I got off the subway in Washington. The ad was for the F-22, a state-of-the-art fighter jet that will cost nearly $200 million per plane to produce. The poster was strategically positioned where many members of Congress and their staff could not miss it when exiting the Metro.

These words, with an imposing F-22, emblazoned the ad: "The first thing it will kill is the enemy's appetite for war." In smaller print it read, "The F-22 dominance fighter: Equipped to destroy the enemy in the sky and on the ground on the first day of a war. Equally adept at destroying an enemy's desire to fight, long before there is a war."

The message could not have been clearer. The way to deal with our enemies is to intimidate, deter, dominate and, if necessary, destroy them. Our national culture in many ways sets the tone for dealing with enemies. Sadly, this lesson trickles down to our children.

A different way: Jesus calls us to respond in a radically different way to our enemies. He taught: "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers and sisters, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? Be perfect [love completely], therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect"(Matthew 5:43-48).

Paul writes, " 'If your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:20-21).

Jesus and Paul assumed we would have enemies. They were not naive about human nature. They, too, knew people who were disgusting and distasteful and hard to love. They were often threatened.

They did not ignore their enemies' hurtful acts. They named them openly. Other times, they sidestepped an enemy's harmful intent.

But what Jesus and Paul did not assume was that we should hate our enemies and respond to them with hostility and harm.

Why would Jesus and Paul place so much emphasis on loving enemies? I suggest three reasons:

1. Loving enemies reveals God's character. According to Jesus, anyone can love friends. But only those who are empowered by God's Spirit can love their enemies. Loving enemies is not a natural thing to do. It requires us to depend on and draw strength from God. In fact, loving enemies is so extraordinary, so unexpected, that it draws attention to God. Indeed, those who love their enemies will be identified as "children of God" (Matthew 5:45).

This high standard of love calls attention to the perfection or completeness of God's love for us. This is how God acts. Paul records, "But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners [when we were God's enemies] Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Loving our enemies is perhaps the most truly evangelical thing Christians can do. For it draws the world's attention to God's character, the God of costly love.

2. Loving enemies always changes us. When an enemy wrongs or frightens us, we easily become consumed with thoughts of paying them back or with plans for protecting ourselves from being hurt again in the future. We can quickly become locked in a destructive cycle. Loving our enemies allows us to break out of the tit-for-tat prison.

Our natural tendency is to demonize our enemies. In this way we can justify our negative actions toward them.

Scott Ritter, former U.N. weapons inspector in Iraq, told a congressional briefing last spring that in order for military planners to get U.S. support for the Gulf War in 1991 it was necessary to demonize Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. "The trouble now" mused Ritter, "is, How do you de-demonize a demon?"

Jesus' answer is that we must humanize enemies. Jesus asks us to pray for, bless, give food and drink to our enemies. These are all practical acts that remind us of the common humanity we share with them. Their needs are similar to ours. Perhaps our enemies have done unspeakable evil. But God's goodness extends to the evil and the good (Matthew 5:45). Jesus invites us to follow this example.

3. Loving our enemies sometimes changes others. Loving our enemies creates the space for change (Romans 12:20). It does not guarantee that our enemies will change. Neither does it assure that they will do us no harm. But if there is a chance of transforming an enemy, it will most likely come about through the unexpected demonstration of love.

Loving our enemies is perhaps the most truly evangelical thing Christians can do. For it draws the world's attention to God's character, the God of costly love.

Rather than allowing an enemy's evil act to overcome us, Paul suggests we go on the offensive and overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21). By loving enemies, we are partners with God in transforming our broken world.

On a global scale, we know that evil can be suppressed for a time with massive shows of lethal force. But it cannot be overcome by using the tools of violence. Historian William Blum notes that since World War II the United States has bombed 22 countries. In none of these cases has bombing led to the emergence of a democratic government respectful of humans rights.

God invites Christians to a task greater than suppressing evil. God calls Christians to overcome evil. Following Jesus' example of loving enemies is a good place to begin.

J. Daryl Byler is director of the Washington Office for Mennonite Central Committee U.S.

Amazing grace

The gift of conscience helps give us direction.

by Gerald W. and L. Marlene Kaufman

Many of us are drawn to God's grace. It is the gentle side of God. For some people, God is the ultimate, forgiving grandparent who overlooks our petty foibles and still has warm cookies, fresh from the oven, waiting for us. The unjudging God who cuts us a lot of slack. A God who does not get overly concerned with the small stuff. God's amazing grace is especially welcome to a people who have known tight boundaries, who have quarreled over mustaches, dress styles and Scripture. We now prefer a God who tolerates diversity in lifestyle. We like the God of the big tent. The God whose graceful gentleness fits well into the ethos of people who believe in peace and justice.

The grace of God surprises and sustains us all. In our hearts we know we do not deserve it, yet it is there for us to claim, with no strings attached. The familiar hymn says, "Infinite grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and set us free." The same grace overwhelmed John Newton, writer of the hymn "Amazing Grace." He was saved from the ravages of a hurricane while delivering slaves from Africa to America. It was then that he became aware of his sinfulness and wrote the words for the hymn. We sing along with him because we know we also need to be saved from our sinfulness, saved by God's amazing grace.

Guilt provides the impetus for seeking God's grace. Without guilt we answer only to our own wishes, and we lose the opportunity to know God's grace.

Jesus was a friend of grace. He was not a big fan of legalism. He seemed to want to give the Torah a softer edge. Perhaps he wanted to present a different image of God. His parables often were about reaching out to the disadvantaged and the disowned. His was, in the words of Don Kraybill, an "upside-down kingdom." We all like the story of the Prodigal Son. It is appealing to have a God who welcomes us home after we have lived among the swine.

But God also gives us amazing guilt. It is not a gift that we think about much. In fact, guilt went out of fashion several decades ago, when protesters warned us to not go on a "guilt trip." Guilt, they said, made us "uptight," something no postmodern person wants to admit to. This change may have helped create the first generation in history to feel guilty for feeling guilty.

In an earlier time, psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud suggested that guilt got in the way of mental health. Some professionals even believed it was necessary to relieve troubled people of their guilt for them to get well.

Our North Star: But before we do surgery on the conscience, we need to understand that appropriate guilt is a vital presence in our life. Guilt can prevent us from getting into trouble. It serves as a guide for good choice making. It keeps us Christ-centered rather than self-centered. It helps us consider the best interests of our family and community. Guilt also invites us to confession and reconciliation when we've made wrong choices. Without guilt we're either unaware of our offenses or lack the motivation to fix what we have broken. Guilt can be our North Star, giving us directions in an uncharted world.

Indeed, guilt is amazing in a number of other ways. First, we cannot experience God's amazing grace without it. It was through guilt that John Newton faced his shame and cried out to God for relief. Only through guilt could he know the full measure of his evil. Guilt helped him know that he was lost. Grace helped him know that he was found. For all of us guilt provides the impetus for seeking God's grace. Without guilt we answer only to our own wishes, and we lose the opportunity to know God's grace.

Second, guilt cannot work in a moral vacuum. Much as we may dislike boundaries, they are essential to the conscience. If we do not give definition to right and wrong, the conscience is unexercised and, like a muscle, atrophies. Boundaries provide a context for guilt. History is filled with the atrocities committed by individuals and entire societies that set aside moral standards. People avoided guilt because they turned off their consciences. Or they chose to redefine boundaries in ways that made guilt irrelevant. We need to treasure the freedom that can come from living within the boundaries of a healthy conscience.

Third, for guilt to be effective it needs to be confessed. Private guilt is a contradiction. The person withholding the guilt becomes imprisoned by it. Conversely, confessed guilt frees both the offender and the offended. At the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, a police officer who was a part of the

AMBS • window

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Focus

A conversation with Loren L. Johns, new AMBS dean

What attracted you to the position of AMBS dean?

Loren: I enjoyed the leadership roles I had at Bluffton College, where I taught Bible the last seven years. I enjoy working with people, collaborating on projects, doing problem-solving and strategic planning, and theological education—all of which are central to the work of a seminary dean. Ever since I graduated from AMBS in 1984, I have appreciated the unique campus experience AMBS offers and have hoped that I might sometime contribute to it. I have been impressed with the scholarship and creativity of the faculty here at AMBS and their commitment to the church. Finally, I sensed and continue to sense the call of God to this position. None of the other considerations would likely have pulled me away from Bluffton College as this did, because I was happy there and felt good about the contribution I was making.

What church experience have you had?

Loren: Besides teaching Bible at Bluffton College, I was theology book editor at Herald Press for four and a half years; I copastored the Blough Mennonite Church near Johnstown, Pa., for eight years; and I served as overseer for several congregations in Allegheny Mennonite Conference. My wife and I now attend Eighth Street Mennonite Church in Goshen.

Tell me about your family.

Loren: My wife Rachel is from Lancaster, Pa., and is a certified nurse-midwife in Goshen. Our daughter Kendra is a senior at Bluffton College. Our daughter Jessica will complete a year with the YES Program in Sweden in December and plans to attend Goshen College.

J. Tyler Klassen

What do you hope to accomplish at AMBS?

Loren: My greatest joy would be in strengthening AMBS's effectiveness in fulfilling its central mission: **to train leaders for pastoral ministry** in the new Mennonite Church. I am excited about the missional direction in which the church is heading. Biblical and theological training, training in pastoral ministry and leadership skills, and the spiritual formation we do at AMBS—I believe all are crucial for the future of the church.

Second, I would like to see **AMBS exercise its voice for theological leadership** in the church. I would like to see AMBS faculty voices and writings at the heart of the spiritual discernment and theological discourse that energizes and informs the life of the church.

Third, I believe that **collaboration represents a growing edge today**. I believe that to be faithful to God's call, the seminary of the future will need to link hands with others across ethnic, racial, national, and even denominational lines in order to prepare people for ministry in a changing world. I have little interest in a lowest-common-denominator approach to ecumenical cooperation, but am excited about articulating the best of the Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage in a mutually respectful context.

Finally, I pray that AMBS can be creative in offering nontraditional on-line or distance education courses without endangering the significant blessing of campus-based learning where **the worshiping community of scholarship works at vital issues in the context of prayer, a commitment to discipleship, and a shared love for the church.**

Inside

Loren Johns's goals take shape in the activities of AMBS

AMBS Panorama previews summer 2001 offerings

Loren Johns, new dean of AMBS, notes four goals in his article on the previous page:

1 *Strengthen AMBS's effectiveness in preparing leaders for pastoral ministry.*

2 *Provide a voice through faculty writing and speaking for theological leadership in the church.*

3 *Collaborate across ethnic, racial, national and denominational lines to prepare people for ministry in a changing world.*

4 *Continue to be a worshiping community of scholarship, working at issues in a context of prayer, commitment to discipleship, and shared love for the church.*

Read more here about ways AMBS is working at these goals today.

1 prepare leaders for pastoral ministry

Erica Thiessen (at the right) spoke at a campus-wide forum recently about her experiences as a chaplaincy resident. "What became very clear to me was that in compassionate caring, God is present in the situation. It wasn't what we said or what we did; just because we were there as a chaplain, as a spiritual caregiver, God was present," Erica said.

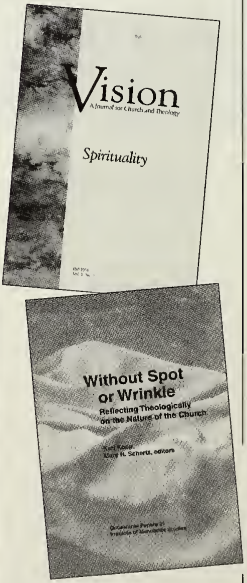
Erick Sawatzky, shown with Erica, is director of field education, working with students, congregations and other organizations through internship assignments.

Summer "vacation" sometimes means even more intense learning than during the rest of the year for seminary students.

This past summer, for example, Erica Thiessen did a chaplaincy residency at an area medical center; Jackie Wyse did a pastoral internship in a local congregation; and Krista Dutt participated in the program, Women, Ministry and the City, in Chicago.

Each of these illustrates ways in which AMBS offers practical, experience-based learning to prepare students for different kinds and settings of ministry.

Ministry students are required to do internships and most do these in congregations. This year one student is doing an internship in a local business as a test to see how ministry can be done in that setting.


Vision
A Journal for Church and Theology
Spirituality
Without Spot or Wrinkle
Reflecting Theologically on the Nature of the Church
Karl Koop, Mary H. Schertz, editors

2 provide a voice for theological leadership

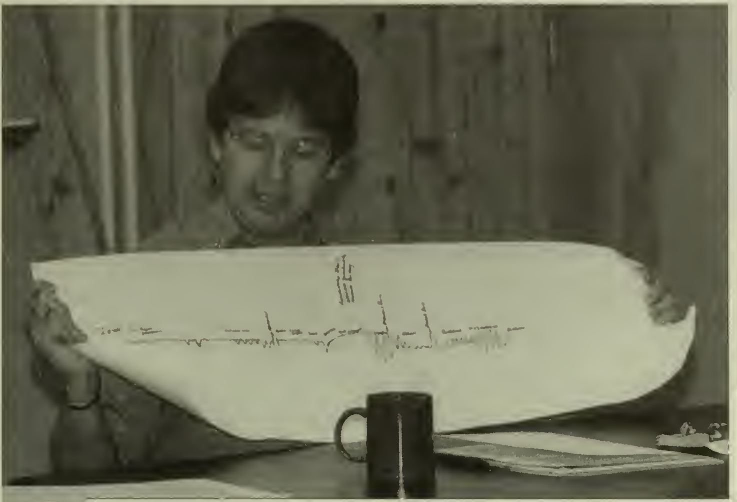
Two publications will emerge this fall that illustrate ways in which AMBS contributes to spiritual discernment and theological discourse in the life of the church. Both are examples of the goal to keep theological reflection and training rooted in the mission of the church.

Vision: A Journal for Church and Theology is a new journal, co-published by Canadian Mennonite Bible College, Winnipeg, Man., and the Institute of Mennonite Studies at AMBS. The first issue focuses on Spirituality, examining this topic from the perspective of Anabaptist-Mennonite experience and thought.

The spring issue will focus on the Eucharist/communion, and the fall 2001 issue on transformation. To subscribe, Canadians may contact CMBC, 204 487-3300; people in the U.S. and countries overseas may contact AMBS, 219 296-6239.

A second publication to be released this fall is the book, *Without Spot or Wrinkle: Reflecting Theologically on the Nature of the Church.* This volume includes presentations made at a February consultation at AMBS, examining what it means to be the church today. Editors of the book are Karl Koop and Mary H. Schertz, both members of the AMBS faculty and directors of the Institute of Mennonite Studies.

For information about purchasing this book, contact IMS, 219 296-6239.



Mary Yoder Holsopple began work in early September as the director of the new violence prevention initiative which AMBS helped establish. She spends time on the campuses of the three schools which collaborate in this effort, AMBS, Goshen College and Andrews University. In the class, Spirituality and Peacemaking, taught by Ted Koontz, she recently shared experiences from Mennonite Central Committee service in Uganda and Mozambique, and from work in Elkhart, Ind., public schools.

3

collaborate to prepare people for ministry in a changing world

Mary Yoder Holsopple served with Mennonite Central Committee in Uganda in the 1980s, with inner-city youth in Elkhart, Ind., in the 1990s. Now she is bringing those experiences of building bridges to a collaborative peace center which AMBS has helped to initiate.

Three educational institutions have teamed up to work at reducing violence and fostering peace in northern Indiana and southern Michigan. AMBS is one, working alongside Goshen College, Goshen, Ind., and Andrews University, a Seventh-Day Adventist institution in Berrien Springs, Mich. Mary has been hired by the three schools as the director of the project.

The effort, funded by a grant from the Teagle Foundation, will work at creating a model to address violence in the local community with the goal of promoting this model in other areas as well. For AMBS students, the center will provide opportunities for internships and involvement in the local community.

Loren Johns, AMBS dean, says, "This effort represents a new, significant investment for AMBS in the local community. We have resources that can be shared but we need structures to learn how to match needs with resources."

Sharon Pittman, chairperson of Andrews University's department of social work, said, "This partnership offers exciting opportunities combining the community-based efforts of our religious traditions to share the Christian gospel of peace. The synergism of working together will enhance the well-being of some of our most at-risk community members."

4

be a worshiping community of scholarship

Worship is as much a part of seminary life as study is. In three chapel services each week, different kinds of worship are encouraged through preaching, prayer, singing, drama and communion. Monthly Evening Song and Prayer services include people from the surrounding area.

These experiences invite students, faculty and staff to worship and pray and they allow students to test and develop their gifts and skills.

Wendy Janzen from Leamington, Ont., helped to plan and lead a Thanksgiving Day (Canadian) chapel service in early October.

The leadership team at AMBS comprises five people: Mark Weidner, vice president; Nelson Kraybill, president; Loren Johns, dean; Virgil Claassen, director of business and finance; and Eileen Saner, director of educational resources and librarian.

Loren Johns began as dean in June 2000, filling the position previously held by Willard M. Swartley. The installation service for Loren is scheduled for Sunday afternoon, November 12, on the AMBS campus.

Summer 2001

Mission and Evangelism Institute *and* *Summer School*

May 29–June 15
Greek Readings; Synoptic Gospels
Mary H. Schertz, Ph.D, AMBS

June 4-9
Conflict, Communication and Conciliation
Carolyn Schrock Shenk, M.A., guest instructor

June 4–15
Torah and Ethics
Perry B. Yoder, Ph.D., AMBS
Church and Race
Gayle Gerber Koontz, Ph.D., AMBS
Christian Encounters with World Faiths
Art McPhee, Ph.D. candidate, AMBS
Celebrating the Christian Year
Marlene Kropf, D.Min.; June Alliman Yoder, D.Min.

June 18–29
The Revelation to John
Nelson Kraybill, Ph.D., AMBS
The Gospel and Contemporary Culture
Wilbert Shenk, Ph.D., AMBS adjunct
Pastoral Counseling and Theology
Daniel Schipani, Dr.Psy., Ph.D., AMBS

July 30–August 10
Leadership in the Missional Church
Art McPhee, Ph.D. candidate, AMBS
Spirituality, Pastoral Care and Healing
Arthur Boers, D.Min., guest instructor

AMBS Panorama

Advent commentaries on the AMBS web site

Commentaries by AMBS faculty on the lectionary readings for Advent are on the AMBS website: www.ambs.edu/Advent.

Pastors' Week to feature Walter Wink

Recovering Spiritual Healing is the theme of Pastors' Week, Jan. 29-Feb. 1, 2001. Walter Wink will be the keynote speaker. June Keener Wink, his wife, will participate in several sessions, working from her unique approach of integrating body, mind and spirit. Worship services during the week will be led by Rachel Miller Jacobs, Barbara Nelson Gingerich and James Nelson Gingerich, all of Goshen, Ind. Register by January 5: 219 296-6207 or <bsawatzky@ambs.edu>.

Course offered on-line

Eastern Christianity, taught by Walter Sawatsky, will be offered to students on-line during spring semester, February 5-May 23.

For information, see the AMBS web site, **www.ambs.edu/hte604e**, or contact the AMBS registrar: <registrar@ambs.edu>.

The purpose of AMBS Window is to invite Mennonite churches to further the work of God's kingdom by calling people to leadership ministries and helping to support their training for ministry.

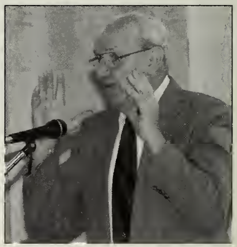
Editor and designer: Mary E. Klassen
Photos: Pages 2-4 - Mary E. Klassen

Distributed three times a year as a supplement to Canadian Mennonite and The Mennonite.

Fall 2000

Church and business

Peter Wiebe, representing Mennonite Economic Development Associates, was the first speaker for a series of discussions between AMBS students and business leaders. He noted the tendency to alienate business people from spiritual matters and encouraged the future pastors to seek the counsel of business people in their congregations. "Generosity flows from accountability," he said, adding that connecting Sunday with the work-week is often the best place to start.



Correction

Sally Weaver Glick received a Master of Divinity degree in May 2000. *AMBS Window, summer 2000,* incorrectly reported her degree.

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amazing guilt

apartheid government had come forward to confess his part in the brutal murders of black South Africans. At the hearing, a woman who had lost her husband and son at the hands of the officer offered a hug of reconciliation after he confessed. He was so overwhelmed that he fainted. When guilt, confession and forgiveness are combined, the effect is powerful. He was, in the words of Archbishop Desmond Tutu, "letting the light and fresh air of forgiveness enter his being." The power of this process is at the core of our church's victim-offender reconciliation program. We may need to search for ways to make it more relevant within congregational life.

Fourth, guilt is a mysterious combination of the spiritual and the physical. The infinite and the finite. It is amazing to realize that the Holy Spirit has to depend on our brain, with all its limitations, to speak to our soul. Clearly the executive center of our brain is the seat of the conscience. It is a place of cells, fibers, synapses and neurotransmitters, where we think, reason, feel and decide. It is also the place where, if permitted, God lives, where transgressions and failures create recognizable physiological responses, like increases in heart rates, sweaty palms and headaches. When our conscience is working correctly, unpleasant feelings remind of things we've done wrong. It is the way God gets our attention. Uncomfortable as these experiences may be, it is God's gift to us for salvation.

Critical window: Unfortunately, we can interfere with the brain's ability to serve as our conscience. The formation of conscience in children may be impeded by parents who are inattentive or absent. If this critical window is missed, children may not be able to develop meaningful guilt later in life. Teens, who are under powerful peer pressure, can lose the vitality of conscience when parents are unwilling to create and support boundaries for them. Perhaps the parents are influenced by their own dislike of boundaries. Adults can lose their ability to experience guilt by continuously ignoring it, succumbing to the effects of stress, fatigue, reduced sleep or through the misuse of toxic substances. We must believe that brain hygiene is conscience hygiene. The Holy Spirit depends on it.

Spirituality and civility both cry out for people of conscience, people who experience both preventive and restorative guilt. A healthy conscience is what keeps us free.

Thus, as God's gift of grace is amazing, the gift of guilt is equally amazing. These gifts are inseparable if we are to be at peace with God and with each other. Spirituality and civility both cry out for people of conscience, people who experience both preventive and restorative guilt. A healthy conscience is what keeps us free. As God's living body we need to discern together God's will for our lives, to define the boundaries for lifestyle, to give a context for conscience, to be a vital venue for covenant, confession, forgiveness and reconciliation. When we sacrifice the presence of conscience, we give away what makes us special to a God who created us to be a reflection of the Divine.

Gerald W. and L. Marlene Kaufman live in Akron, Pa. This article is adapted from a sermon they gave at Akron Mennonite Church.

Balkan refugee stories take center stage

New play recounts former MCC worker's experiences

MCC photo by Jim Bishop

Mennonite Central Committee worker Amy Gopp, played by Eastern Mennonite University student Emma Stutzman, confides in co-worker Vjeko, played by EMU student Trent Wagler, in *Torba,* a new play about Gopp's experiences with displaced people in the Balkans. The play, written and directed by EMU professor Ingrid DeSanctis, premiered at the school last month.

> **My hope is that the audience leaves the play feeling they know something about the former Yugoslavia.**
>
> —*Amy Gopp*

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Amy Gopp left for Croatia on a Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in 1995 with books on peace. Four years later, she returned to the United States with a wealth of stories in her journals and in her memories about the life and struggles in the aftermath of the war in Bosnia.

Those stories have now been turned into a play about Gopp's experiences among people deeply divided by religious and ethnic differences in the former Yugoslavia. The play, called *Torba,* premiered last month at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg.

After her return to the United States, Gopp shared her experiences with longtime friend Ingrid DeSanctis, an EMU drama professor.

"When Amy visited Virginia, we stayed up late at night, and I typed while she talked," DeSanctis says. "I was especially intrigued by the items refugees packed in their suitcases—what each item was and what it said about that person."

Coffee grinders, photographs, diapers, make-up and books were all part of the mix. Some would later burn their books for warmth, along with floorboards and pieces of rubber tires.

DeSanctis developed the stories into *Torba,* which means "bag." The play focuses on friendships Gopp formed with displaced people in the Balkans. DeSanctis directed *Torba,* which was peformed by EMU students. MCC is considering sponsoring more performances in the future.

"This play raises awareness," Gopp says, who was at the first performance. "It's entertaining on one level, but my hope is that the audience leaves the play feeling they know something about the former Yugoslavia."

The audience may learn, for example, that the conflict tore friends, neighbors and families apart, that the tradition of making and drinking coffee brought communities together, that names are often the only distinguishing features between Serbs, Croats and Muslims in the Balkans. The play makes little distinction between these different groups of people, though the war was centered around ethnic differences.

"We wanted to show that everyone suffered," says Gopp, who now lives in Washington.

The play shows that the Serbian people, having no outside news source, did not understand NATO bombing. *Torba* also depicts some North American relief efforts, including truckloads of microwave dinners and worn-out shoes and clothing.—*Maria Linder of MCC News Service*

Artful worship

Mary E. Klassen

Karmen Krahn Fehr, a student and staff member at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind., hangs a visual display in the AMBS chapel for a worship service to conclude "The Art of Worship," an Oct. 6-8 conference examining the relationship between art and worship. The conference, sponsored by AMBS and Amigo Centre of Sturgis, Mich., drew 62 people. The weekend covered aspects of worship including preaching, music selection, song leading, movement, Scripture reading, visual displays and verbal elements of worship. "The speakers, taking the word 'art' in its broadest sense, pushed me to see that art is indeed an essential part of worship," says Rachel S. Gerber, minister of youth and young adults at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind. Organizers intend to make the conference an annual event.

MCC sends more aid to Palestine as tensions grow

WINNIPEG—With deaths and injuries continuing to mount in Palestine and Israel after a month of violence, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) has made an emergency donation of $36,000 to Palestinian health organizations for surgical equipment, medicines and other supplies.

This donation comes on top of $20,000 worth of MCC medical assistance that has already been distributed through partner organizations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

In the past month of unrest, about 130 people have been killed, most of them Palestinians, and thousands have been injured, leaving local health agencies facing a crisis.

But the violence has hit almost every facet of life in the occupied territories. The work of MCC's Palestinian partner organizations has also been disrupted. An internal closure within the West Bank prevents Palestinians from traveling from town to town, bringing normal development work to a standstill, says MCC country representative Alain Epp Weaver.

For instance, a women's training program in Ramallah, whose revolving loan program is bolstered by an annual MCC grant, has been unable to continue its activities because trainers have been unable to reach the West Bank villages where they teach animal husbandry and financial administration.

Nazareth, the largest Arab city in Israel, was the site of some of the worst rioting in the first half of October. Arab citizens say the Israeli army and police have behaved as if they were facing enemies on a battlefield rather than citizens of the state.

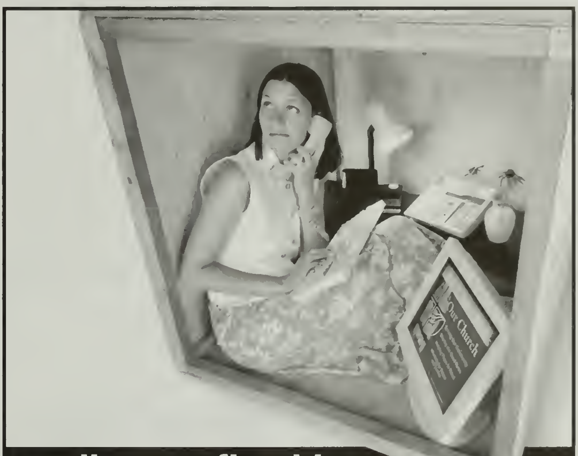
During their last four years in Nazareth, Mennonite Board of Missions workers Michael and Virginia Hostetler have built relationships with local Arab Christians. "We have heard their stories and felt their discouragement at being ignored, not only in their country but also in the larger world," Virginia Hostetler says. " … There are deep roots of faith here, going back centuries and centuries."

The unrest has also increased tensions in neighboring countries. Lebanon is home to thousands of Palestinian refugees, and skirmishes between Israeli forces and Hezbollah fighters have sometimes led to air strikes against Lebanon.

"On the outside, things appear normal in Beirut," says Randal Nickel, an MCC worker in Lebanon. " … However, under the surface, there is a lot of anger."

In Egypt, MCC worker Craig Anderson reports demonstratations and some rioting. Egyptians "feel solidarity with their fellow Arab Palestinian brothers and sisters and are angry with the injustice of it all," Anderson says, "but feel powerless in the face of what they see as a ruthless, well-armed force backed by the world's single superpower."

That anger is also found in Jordan, says MCC worker Deborah Fast. "We know numerous people who have lost family members in the last couple of weeks," she says.—*Carol Thiessen of MCC News Service with MBM News Service*



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Choice Books takes good news to cities

Ten percent of book displays found in urban areas

Hunger for God is especially strong in the inner city.

—Vernon Hochstetler

Duane Boudreaux had a vision: He wanted to create a miniature Christian bookstore in his Circle Food Store, located in the middle of a large housing project in central New Orleans. So two years ago, he asked Choice Books to install a display in his store. Last year, Choice Books honored Circle Food Store with the highest volume independent supermarket sales award for selling 1,718 books in one year.

About 10 percent of Choice Books' 4,500 displays are located in urban areas such as Atlanta, Baltimore, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, Philadelphia and Richmond, Va. New York alone has 100 Choice Books displays.

Many New York retail locations with displays are small, independent stores, which provides unique opportunities, says Choice Books regional manager Dave King. A Choice Books service representative recently spent an hour in discussion about spirituality with a Jewish store owner.

"At one store in Brooklyn, we restocked a display with 20 Bibles, and by the next week, all but one Bible sold," King says. "Bible study helps, Bible verse books and children's Bible story books are also high sellers."

Choice Books, headquartered in Harrisonburg, Va., sold a record of more than 3 million books in 1999. Displays can be found in supermarkets, mass merchandise stores, airports, drugstores, travel centers, gift shops, hospitals and more than 75 military bases. The highest volume account last year was Miami International Airport, which sold 28,915 books from 13 displays.

Lil Worley, Choice Books service representative for Florida, tells of a saleswoman at one of the Miami International Airport gift shops who pointed out that there was only one copy of *God Is in the Small Stuff* remaining on the display. The saleswoman was afraid the book would be sold before the display could be restocked. Worley assured her that more copies would be coming.

Worley later discovered that the saleswoman was reading the book. Between customers, she would go to the display, open the book and continue reading where she had left her marker. Apparently the saleswoman wanted to finish the book before it was sold.

Choice Books last year expanded its ministry with the creation of a regional distributorship based in Phoenix. "Store managers seemed hardened and cynical to anything pertaining to Christianity," says regional director Vernon Hochstetler. "However, if we can convince them to try our product/service, they are generally surprised by the strong customer interest and sales. Hunger for God is especially strong in the inner city."

While servicing a display in a Phoenix hospital, Hochstetler was asked by a customer whether he sells a certain book. Before he could answer, the manager responded: "Oh no, he doesn't carry anything but God books. He's my God book man."

Says Hochstetler, "I am proud to be an advocate for God in this way."

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EMU student receives Bill Gates scholarship

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Jill M. Goyette is finding new "Windows" of opportunity opening for her. A junior at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU), Harrisonburg, she has been named the recipient of a Bill Gates-funded scholarship.

As a Gates Millennium Scholar, Goyette will receive $4,540 for each semester of the 2000-2001 school year. The scholarship is funded by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and funded by the United Negro College Fund. Gates is chair and chief executive officer of Microsoft.

To be eligible for the award, applicants must be African-American, Native American, Asian or Hispanic U.S. citizens or resident aliens. Other criteria include a 3.3 grade point average, financial need and demonstrated leadership abilities.

Goyette, from Atlanta, is majoring in sociology with a minor in Teaching English as a Second Language.

Landmark windmill destroyed in suspicious fire

STEINBACH, Man.—Arson is suspected in an Oct. 22 fire that destroyed the landmark windmill at the Mennonite Heritage Village in Steinbach. The 72-foot-high windmill was engulfed in flames when firefighters arrived at 3:30 a.m. An 1881 church and an 1876 thatch-roof log house suffered minor damage.

Board president John Peters says the windmill will be rebuilt. "The windmill is the heart of this community, and it's the centerpiece of our musuem," he says.

The fully operational windmill was built in 1872 with the help of a Dutch expert.
—*Canadian Mennonite*

Longtime Goshen biology professor dies at 82

GOSHEN, Ind.—C. Franklin Bishop, for 39 years a biology professor at Goshen College, died Oct. 29 after a six-month battle with cancer. He was 82.

A native of Bucks County, Pa., he graduated from Goshen in 1940, then returned to the school as a professor in 1956. He retired in 1985, although he continued to teach until last year.

In 1967, Bishop traveled around the world for a Mennonite Central Committee-Mennonite Board of Missions project on world hunger. In 1976, MCC supported his research in tropical agriculture in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia and Peru.

In 1995, Bishop and six Goshen students catalogued every tree in the city's public right of way—6,500 trees, more than 70 percent of them maples.

by the way ...

Bertha Petter, longtime General Conference Mennonite Church missionary among Native Americans, was the first GC woman to earn a bachelor's degree, graduating from Wittenberg College, Springfield, Ohio, in 1896.
—*Mennonite Weekly Review*

Goshen College

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Goshen College, and the Barney II Foundation celebrate the 2000 Barnabas Servant Leadership Award scholarships, honoring the New Testament model of Joseph (Barnabas) who lived to serve and encourage others:

Ben Hartman – Goshen, Indiana
English and Peace, Justice and Conflict Studies major. Pax Club and Student Peace Action Network member. Services with Big Brothers/Big Sisters, GC-Mennonite Disabilities group home, LaCasa of Goshen, Jubilee Partners. All award money to LaCasa, Mennonite Central Committee.

Ezra Nugroho – Semarang, Indonesia
Computer Science major. Student Senate president. International Student Club and International Christian Student Fellowship member. Campus Ministries service trips. Award money to Student Senate.

"At Goshen College we believe that the highest form of leadership is service. Excellence in education comes from discovering this truth, which is why Goshen College exists."– Shirley H. Showalter, President of Goshen College

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Workers

Faler, Brad, was installed Oct. 1 as associate pastor of North Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Mishler, Grace, Elkhart, Ind., has begun a three-year Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) assignment in Southeast Asia, developing a social work curriculum at a university.

Oppedisano, Chrissie, Nashville, Tenn., has begun a one-year Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions assignment in Bari, Italy, teaching English.

Otto, Robert and Wilda, have retired in Belgium after 35 years of service with Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) there.

Paulovich, Cheryl, Goshen, Ind., has begun a two-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Goshen, working as the regional assistant for the MCC Great Lakes office.

Pauls, Sonya, Henderson, Neb., has begun a one-year MCC Service and Learning Together (SALT) term in Cairo, Egypt, as a preschool assistant at St. Michael Coptic Orthodox Church.

Penner, Artur, Osthofen, Germany, has begun a two-year Mennonite Voluntary Service (MVS) assignment as a carpenter for Kaw Valley Habitat for Humanity in Kansas City, Kan.

Penner, Dietrich, Hoxter-Stahle, Germany, has begun a one-year MVS assignment with Seattle Emergency Housing.

Penner, Katja, Recklinghausen, Germany, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a paraprofessional for Youth Development Services Inc. in Wichita, Kan.

Peters, William, Lohne, Germany, has begun a two-year MVS assignment as a carpenter's assistant with Habitat for Humanity in St. Louis.

Peterson, Ken, has begun as pastor at First Mennonite Church, Hillsboro, Kan.

Plett, Lorraine Kehler, Winnipeg, has begun a two-year MVS assignment in Brownsville, Texas.

Plett, Randy, Winnipeg, has begun a two-year MVS assignment as a nurse at the Brownsville (Texas) Community Health Center.

Putnam, Junlah, Chicago, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a teacher's aide at the Chicago Mennonite Learning Center.

Rustom, Nadia, Bielefeld, Germany, has begun a one-year MVS assignment with an after-school program of Community of Hope, Washington.

Sawatzky, David and Rachel Roth, Akron, Pa., have begun a two-year MCC assignment in Harlan, Ky. David will work as a carpenter, and Rachel will be a program planner and activities coordinator.

Schlabach, Abner and Virginia Glass, have completed three-year MBM assignments as mission associates in England.

Schmidt, Dirk, McLean, Va., has begun an 11-month MVS assignment as a program assistant for Missouri Coalition for the Environment in St. Louis.

Schrock, Ramont, Exeland, Wis., has begun a three-year MCC assignment in Bangladesh, as a microbiologist.

Seitz, Delbert, Harrisonburg, Va., has begun a three-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as director of operations at Ten Thousand Villages.

Showalter, Virginia, Linville, Va., has begun a one-year MVS assignment teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) for Catholic Community Services in Kansas City, Kan.

Siemens, Audrey, Water Valley, Alta., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a community worker at Welcome Inn and North Hamilton Community Health Centre, Hamilton, Ont.

Simonsick, Robert, was licensed Sept. 10 as pastor of Calico Rock (Ark.) Mennonite Church.

Slater, Kate and Keith, Parnell, Iowa, have begun a three-year MBM assignment doing language development work with Wycliffe Bible Translators in Asia.

Smucker, Rebecca, Granger, Ind., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a program assistant for Adopt-a-Beach in Seattle.

Snyder, Kendra, Salem, Ore., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a microloan program assistant for Christian Community Services in Alamosa, Colo.

Souder, Jennifer, Green Lane, Pa., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a medical assistant and outreach worker for Community Medical Center in Washington.

Steckly, Ken, has begun as pastor at Sycamore Grove Mennonite Church, Garden City, Mo.

Tobin, Hosanna, Det Udom, Thailand, has begun a one-year EMM assignment in Thailand working in church development and evangelism with her parents, EMM workers Carol and Skip Tobin.

Tschetter, Edie, Freeman, S.D., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Freeman, where she will be a regional associate.

Votaw, Abbe, Pioneer, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a program assistant with Treehouse in Seattle.

Warfel, Don and Eunice, Waxhaw, N.C., have begun a two-year EMM assignment in Melbourne, Australia, teaching aviation mechanics at the Bible College of Victoria.

Way, Laura, Bluffton, Ohio, has begun a one-year MVS assignment working with the Reno County Victim Offender Reconciliation Program and the New Beginnings homeless shelter in Hutchinson, Kan.

Wentorf, Derek, Goshen, Ind., has begun a one-year MVS assignment as a program assistant with Puget Soundkeeper Alliance in Seattle.

Wiens, Luc, Enkenbach, Germany, has begun a two-year MVS assignment as a carpenter with Habitat for Humanity in Winnipeg.

Wurslin, Oliver, Rheinfelden, Germany, has begun a two-year MVS assignment with the John Howard Society in Winnipeg.

Births

Barger, Raina Ann Shreiner, Sept. 29, to Jude and Lori Ann (Shreiner) Barger, Goshen, Ind.

Bauman, Emily Sue, Aug. 7, to Pam (Bigger) and Tony Bauman, Mishawaka, Ind.

Breneman, Jonathon Daniel, Sept. 20, to Cyndi and Daryl Breneman, Pottstown, Pa.

Brown, James Aaron Arthur, Oct. 8, to Dan and JoAnne Brown, Drayton, Ont.

Crates, Taylor Beth, Oct. 12, to Britton and Nancy (Miller) Crates, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Friesen, Hayley Grace, Oct. 12, to Betty (Dunn) and Matthew Friesen, Thorton, Colo.

Gaby, Eric Matthew and Kaylie Nicole (twins), Sept. 14 to Mark and Sonny (Beasley) Gaby, Goshen, Ind.

Gerber, Alexis Faith, Oct. 12, to Joanna (Haman) and Karsten Gerber, Telford, Pa.

Giguere, Joshua Dalton, Sept. 15, to Jeremy and Sherri (Waugh) Giguere, Mesa, Ariz.

Gould, Selby Elizabeth, Sept. 28, to Brenda (Sommers) and Jon Gould, Sarasota, Fla.

Holsopple, Molly Jo, Oct. 9, to Mary Jo (Smith) and Merle Holsopple, Indianapolis.

Hostetler, Brandon David, Oct. 13, to David and Tara (Miller) Hostetler, Dundee, Ohio.

Janzen, Michala Marie, Sept. 5, to Tammie (Lantz) and Virgil Janzen, Holmesville, Neb.

Kennel, Simon Avery, Oct. 1, to Betty (Lew) and Kurt Kennel, Rochester, Minn.

Miller, Brooke Alexis, Oct. 11, to Brenda (Hamsher) and Brian Miller, Sugarcreek, Ohio.

Miller, Jadyn Briann, July 7, 1999, received for adoption, Oct. 6, 2000, by Betty (Miller) and Stephen Miller, Goshen, Ind.

Miller, Peyton Dayne, Oct. 10, to Cathy and Jonas Miller, Dundee, Ohio.

Miller, Timothy Mark Jr., Oct. 5, to Jennifer (Durham) and Timothy Miller, Goshen, Ind.

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Moyer, Brody Shea, Sept. 21, to Chari (Landes) and Chris Moyer, Telford, Pa.

Nafziger, Augusta Marie, Oct. 17, to Michael Ann Courtney and Jeremy Nafziger, Broad Run, Va.

Werts, Austin Thomas, Oct. 11, to Amanda (Partch) and DeWayne Werts II, Davidsville, Pa.

Yoder, Kayla Mae, Sept. 12, to Diana (McDanel) and Keith Yoder, Davidsville, Pa.

Marriages

Carpenter/Zellers: Andrew Carpenter, Pettisville, Ohio, and Heather Zellers, Defiance, Ohio, Sept. 23 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Gibbs/Walton: Jerry Gibbs, Lancaster, Pa., and Donna Walton, Lancaster, Sept. 23 at Lancaster.

Gingerich/Smlatic: Debra Gingerich, Lancaster, Pa., and Zvanko Smlatic, Bosnia, Sept. 9 at Community Mennonite Church, Lancaster.

Harris/Schumm: Jonathan Harris, Rochester, Minn., and Darla Schumm, Goshen, Ind., Oct. 14 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hochstedler/Yoder: Jessica Hochstedler and Karsten Yoder, Wellman, Iowa, Sept. 23 at West Union Mennonite Church, Parnell, Iowa.

Kauffman/Rutter: Tonya Kauffman, Goshen, Ind., and Dana Rutter, Goshen, Oct. 7 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Mast/Richardson: Jon Mast, Walnut Creek, Ohio, and Cassie Richardson, Sugarcreek, Ohio, Sept. 30 at Walnut Creek Mennonite Church.

Miller/Worthman: Melissa Miller, Millersburg, Ind., and Zack Worthman, Millersburg, Aug. 12 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Strunk/Van Pelt: Russel Strunk, Lancaster, Pa., and Deb Van Pelt, Lancaster, Aug. 5 at Pequea, Pa.

Deaths

Albrecht, Helen Kaufman, 86, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died Oct. 1. Spouse: Harvey Albrecht (deceased). Parents: Alfred and Emma Stucky Kaufman (deceased). Survivors: children Darrel, Leland, Joyce Janzen, Donna Schrag; 12 grandchildren; three stepgrandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren; five step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 6 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie.

Graber, Della Waltner, 91, Hutchinson, Kan., died Sept. 22. Spouse: Joe Graber (deceased). Parents: Joe and Carrie Graber Waltner (deceased). Survivors: children Claire, Jane Hays, Elaine Brown; seven grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 27 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie.

Hunt, Edwin, 61, Wellsville, N.Y., died Aug. 21 of blood clots in the lungs. Spouse: Sandra Hunt. Other survivors: children Eric, Mark, Randy, Michael, Tammy Fanton; six grandchildren. Funeral: Aug. 24 at Yorks Corners Mennonite Church, Wellsville.

Krehbiel, Emil, 95, Pretty Prairie, Kan., died Oct. 4. Spouse: Elsie Albright Krehbiel. Parents: Jonas and Mary Schrag Krehbiel (deceased). Other survivors: children Merlin, Arlene Huxman, Letha Warkentin; nine grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 9 at First Mennonite Church, Pretty Prairie.

Landis, Katie Gascho, 96, Hesston, Kan., died Oct. 18. Spouse: Noah Landis (deceased). Parents: Daniel and Mary Gascho (deceased). Survivors: stepchildren Elmer, Fred, Bernice Nafziger, Bonnie Driver, Vivian Murray; 22 stepgrandchildren; 33 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 21 at Schowalter Villa, Hesston.

Peifer, Irvin, 92, Lititz, Pa., died Oct. 13 of pneumonia. Spouse: Mary Hoober Peifer (deceased). Parents: Christian and Amy Stoner Peifer (deceased). Survivors: children Amy Marie Taylor, Rosanne Rohrer, Carol Kreider, Martha Kilheffer, Irvin, Jay; 20 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 18 at West Bethany Chapel, Landis Homes, Lititz.

Ripper, Lula Neill, 88, Morton, Ill., died Oct. 1. Spouse: Edward Ripper (deceased). Parents: Fred and Josephine Thomas Neill (deceased). Survivors: children Edward, Thomas, Mary Ann Metternich; four grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 5 at First Mennonite Church, Morton.

Sauder, Ray, 87, Archbold, Ohio, died Oct. 9. Spouse: Lillian Nafziger Sauder (deceased). Parents: William and Emma Sauder (deceased). Survivors: son Jim; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 12 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

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classifieds

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- **Menno House**, a live-in Christian guest/resident house and ministry of Manhattan Mennonite Fellowship, seeks ***manager***, individual or couple. 25 hours/week; potential full-time. Start January 2001. Inquiries/applications: Menno House Board, 314 E. 19th St., New York, NY 10003; tel/fax 212-673-7970.

- **Beaver Camp** seeks a ***program specialist*** starting spring 2001. Primary responsibilities are children's resident camp programs and challenge course. Salary and benefit package.

  Send resume to Emanuel Gingerich, HC 62 Box 221, Lowville, NY 13367-9115; email <emanuel@beavercamp.org>.

- **Spruce Lake Fellowship**, a Franconia Conference Mennonite church in the Pocono Mountains of northeastern Pa., seeks a Mennonite ***pastor or couple*** to serve in a VS capacity for a one-year term. Housing, meals, health care and monthly stipend provided. Est. 20-25 hrs./wk. Assignment to begin ASAP.

  Contact Joy Kauffman, 570-595-7505. Send resume with references to Pastoral Search Committee, RR 1 Box 605, Canadensis, PA 18325.

- **Wooster Mennonite Church** is seeking a half-time ***youth pastor***. Candidates must have a strong commitment to Christ and to Anabaptist beliefs, as well as an excitement to see young people follow Christ.

  For more information, please contact or send resume to Wooster Mennonite Church, 1563 Beall Ave., Wooster, OH 44691; email <WoosterMC@sssnet.com>.

- **Freeman Academy**, Freeman, S.D., grades 5-12, seeks full-time ***admissions recruiter***. Base pay $15,000 plus $500 per student. Contact 605-925-4237; fax 605-925-4271.

- **General Rose Hospital *1-W reunion*** Aug. 18-19, 2001, at the Holiday Inn, York, Neb. If your address has changed, contact Cal Regier, Box 473, Henderson, NE 68371; or call 402-723-4398.

- **Anabaptist and Brethren Agency**, Lancaster, Pa., a general agency servicing property mutual aid service providers across the country, is seeking an ***underwriter/CSR*** for a full-time salaried position. We have preference for insurance agency experience, current P/C license and strong analytical, communication and computer skills. We will consider appropriate experience in lieu of some of these requirements. We offer an exceptional working environment, salary and benefits commensurate with your skills.

  Please forward letter of interest and resume to Anabaptist and Brethren Agency, P.O. Box 5364, Lancaster, PA 17606-5364; fax 717-509-4549.

- **Laurelville Mennonite Church Center** seeks a full-time ***executive director***. Responsibilities include vision and passion for the ministry, leadership skills, interest and experience in development and spiritual maturity.

  Please send a letter of application and resume by Nov. 30, 2000, to Gloria Horst Rosenberger, Association President, Laurelville Mennonite Church Center, Rt. 5 Box 145, Mount Pleasant, PA 15666-8908. For more information on Laurelville: <www.laurelville.org>.

- **Conrad Grebel College**, a residence and teaching facility affiliated with the University of Waterloo, seeks a married couple for the position of ***senior residents***, beginning May 1, 2001. The role involves living in an apartment in the college's residence building and supervising the college during nonbusiness hours. Rent and utilities are free in exchange for performance of duties. Applicants should be mature, responsible and able to relate to a broad range of people, especially students in residence.

  If interested, contact E. Paul Penner, CGC Operations Manager, 519-885-0220 ext. 231. Application deadline is Nov. 24, 2000.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***youth pastor*** who will join the current pastoral team. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. Located in southeastern Pa., Montgomery County, Franconia has an exciting and growing jr. and sr. high youth program.

  Interested people should send their resume to Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email <info@franconiamennonite.org>.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** has an opening for a full-time ***middle school teacher*** beginning Jan. 18, 2001. A bachelor's degree in education is required. This teacher would teach social studies, Bible and Spanish. Experience with middle school students is preferred.

  Send a letter of application, resume and LACMS application to MCDS, attn. Crist Peachey, Administrator, 686 Lebanon Rd., Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Zion Mennonite Church** seeks the following:

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  Clerical assistant: Assist the coordinator of congregational life, all office staff and church committees in their daily clerical tasks. This person will perform various tasks such as being a receptionist in the office, phone-answering, typing, computer entries, filing, formatting documents. This person must have good people skills, be able to work well with computers, have good organizational skills and be flexible. Hours are flexible, with 15 hr/wk expected.

  Resumes for either position should be forwarded to: Ron Price, c/o Zion Mennonite Church, 149 Cherry Lane, PO Box 64495, Souderton, PA 18964; email <PriceR@univest.net>.

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A list of books and other resources to help us in our Christian walk:

Evocations of Grace: Writings on Ecology, Theology and Ethics by Joseph Sittler, edited by Steven Bouma-Prediger and Peter Bakken (Eerdmans, 2000, $20), gathers 10 major writings by pioneering ecological theologian Joseph Sittler. These essays spanning Sittler's career argue for the vital connection between Christian theology, ethics and the natural world.

Moment by Moment: A Retreat in Everyday Life by Carol Ann Smith and Eugene F. Merz (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $10.95) guides readers with thought-provoking questions, practical suggestions and excerpts chosen from Scripture and *The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.* It can be used by an individual or by groups for daily prayer, reflection or as themes for a retreat.

Devotions to Go by Bob Grussing and Jolene De Heer (CRC Publications, 2000, $3.50) is a series aimed to help teens squeeze in time for devotions in the face of demands for their time. Each book focuses on a book of the Bible. Devotions on Philippians, Jonah and James are available.

The Fingerprints of God: Tracking the Divine Suspect Through a History of Images by Robert Farrar Capon (Eerdmans, 2000, $15) explores various images to help people talk about God and the nature of Scripture, then surveys the work of major thinkers throughout church history, pointing out the strong and weak images they have produced.

A Covenant to Keep: Biblical Meditations on the Theme of Justice by James Skillen (Public Justice Resource Centre, 2000, $20) includes meditations, discussion questions and tips for action responses for adult study groups, social justice committees and individuals. Order from Suite 311, 229 College St., Toronto, ON M5T 1R4, phone 416-979-2443.

20th-Century Thoughts That Shaped the Church by Vernon McLellan (Tyndale, 2000, $10.99) quotes scores of notable men and women. It is arranged topically. *20th-Century People That Shaped the Church* by Todd Temple and Kim Twitchell (Tyndale, 2000, $10.99) examines in detail the lives of Christians who shaped the church in the 20th century. It includes accounts of faith—from Brother Andrew to Mother Teresa, from Billy Sunday to Bill Hybels.

Creation and Environment: An Anabaptist Perspective on a Sustainable World, edited by Calvin Redekop (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, $19.95), explores the uniquely Anabaptist view of our relationship with the created order. Contributors include Kenton Brubaker, Thomas Finger, Karen Klassen Harder and James Harder, Lawrence Hart, Carl Keener, Walter Klaassen, Mel Schmidt and Dorothy Jean Weaver.

Touched by a Saint: Personal Encounters With Mother Teresa by Susan Crimp (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $14.95) speaks in words and photos to the powerful spiritual charisma of Mother Teresa.

Third Way Café (<www.thirdway.com>), the web site developed by Mennonite Board of Missions, has added a new section in Spanish, giving a brief history and basic information about what Mennonites believe. *Bienvenidos a Nuestra Familia de Fe* is the Spanish version of the "Welcome to Our Family of Faith" brochure. The on-line version has new photos.

Teaching to Transform: Perspectives on Mennonite Higher Education, edited by Keith Graber Miller (Pinchpenny Press, 2000, $8), focuses on the meaning of traditional and modern Anabaptist-Mennonite educational philosophy. It's available from Goshen College.

Recommended reading

Anabaptists and Postmodernity, edited by Susan Biesecker-Mast and Gerald Biesecker-Mast (Pandora Press U.S., 2000, $26.95) includes 21 essays from papers presented at a conference in 1998 at Bluffton (Ohio) College. Most of these are geared to scholars, but a few are accessible, such as Marlene Kropf's "The Lord Is Still My Shepherd When I Sing." Susan Biesecker-Mast writes a helpful introduction, her main point being that we need to pay attention to who we are and to our context. While most of the writers celebrate the positives of postmodernism, theologians Stanley Hauerwas and Thomas Finger sound warnings. This is a helpful volume for those willing to work through it.—*gh*

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Everett J. Thomas

J. Lorne Peachey

A conversation between the editors

This issue of The Mennonite *is the first for Everett J. Thomas as editor. He and founding editor J. Lorne Peachey had the following conversation about this transition.*

Thomas: Thanks for creating this new magazine for the church. This is the first issue without your name on the masthead. How does it feel to be leaving?

If I say, "Wonderful," (which it mostly is), readers will question why I'm so eager to get out. If I say, "Terrible," which it mostly isn't, they will wonder why I decided to resign.

Serving as editor of *The Mennonite* was a call from God. I experienced God's voice in dramatic ways that told me this was what I should do with my life—for a season. I also had definite signs when this call was completed. That confirmation makes me feel good about no longer having my name on the masthead as editor.

Thomas: Since March, when it was announced I would be the new editor, people having been telling me they hope I have a thick skin. What is that all about?

Mennonites feel deeply about their denominational magazine. Many read it closely—and respond to what they read, sometimes with strong emotions. As editor, I was always grateful that people cared so much, though I must admit to an occasional sleepless night because of criticism.

A thick skin helps, yes. But so does remembering that you are editing this magazine for God and the church. It belongs to them; as editor you are its servant caretaker.

Thomas: The comment I've heard most in the last six months suggests that the editor is expected to help lead our denomination during this challenging transformation period. How does the editor help lead the new Mennonite Church?

Lee Snyder, Mennonite Church USA moderator, recently said that leaders are people who offer hope. That's what I tried to do as editor—offer hope for our church, the Mennonite Church, that we can know God's will and with that knowledge minister to our world.

I can only offer that hope, however, as I experience it in my own life. A close relationship with God and faith that God has a future for our church—these are my prayers for you in your new role.

All of which leads me to ask you:

Peachey: I know that a sense of call is important for the choices you make in life. How have you experienced God's call to edit *The Mennonite*?

I received this call first and most directly from the search committee. I asked them why they wanted to nominate me for this position. Their primary answer was that they saw me as someone who could help lead the church during these confusing times.

In the months since the announcement, I have been blessed by the many sisters and brothers who expressed their confidence in me and in my gifts. Through cards, letters, emails and private conversations, they assured me of their prayers and support. These months I have sensed God's presence confirming this call to a new ministry for this time.

Peachey: Much of your experience in the Mennonite church has been with the denominational structures. Now you are responsible for reporting and even sometimes critiquing those structures. How can readers be sure you will view what's happening as a journalist-participant and no longer just as a participant?

I have great respect for our leaders in places like Newton, Kan., and Elkhart, Ind. They serve the church faithfully and creatively. But I understand that the editor walks a tightrope. The magazine is intentionally positioned as semi-independent from the denominational structures, and occasionally it is expected to serve in a watchdog role for the rest of the church.

The magazine's first loyalty must be to the readers; their subscription dollars make this magazine financially viable. I believe that most of our readers want their magazine to help make the Mennonite Church USA stronger. By God's grace and power, we will do that.

Peachey: This is the first issue of *The Mennonite* with your name on the masthead as editor. How does that feel?

I mostly feel God's peace and presence, but sometimes I also feel fear. I think you better plan on getting a few calls from me!

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November 14, 2000

artists reveal God's beauty

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8 The use of graphic design to build identity
10 Mission proposal emphasizes grass roots
12 Young adults call for place in new church
20 Glorify God, grow in faith

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

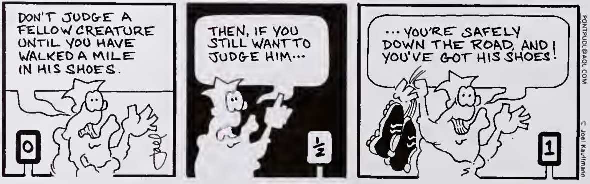
Out of the pit

Thank you for printing the article on depression by Carl N. Rutt ("Depression Is Not the End," Oct. 10). I am glad that we as a church are talking about these painful issues and offering hope to those who suffer. I happen to be one of those people. I have suffered for three years now and am finally coming out of the bottomless pit. I can see an end to this now, whereas before there was none. I am grateful. Had I not had the love, acceptance and support of my family, local church, broader Mennonite church and Mennonite Board of Missions praying and supporting me, I would not be here today to write. Yes, I was suicidal and hospitalized. I am getting well.

We, as people of the church, need to walk with people who suffer and not condemn them. We do enough condemning of ourselves. It is only when we can talk about it that there can be acceptance, understanding and healing. I commend Muzet Felgar for risking telling the church of her illness ("Would My Friends Think I Was Crazy?" Oct. 10). The statistics here in England are that one in 10 people will suffer depression at some time in their lives. With so many vulnerable people, we need to understand depression and learn how to support and walk alongside those who are suffering. I was fortunate when I was hospitalized. Many people came to visit and let me just cry on their shoulder without saying anything. They gave me hope when I had none. They supported my husband and offered help and understanding when needed.

People who suffer need people to come and sit with them. You don't need to make things happy or better. You can't, but you can be a friend and listen or just be there. Treat me as normal, not as one unable to think. I can think and understand quite a bit. I might feel rejected not only by the world but also by God. Please try to understand that and don't force me into a relationship with God until I am better and understand that he hasn't rejected me. Hold me up before God for healing. Take me with you to do your shopping or to have coffee somewhere. It means a lot to be loved and included when you feel unlovable. It helps the healing process.—*Susan Fahrer, Mennonite Board of Missions mission associate, Horsham, England*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**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I appreciate Rutt's article, but I see a few spaces that need to be filled in. First, the article focuses on mood disorders such as depression. But the type of depression where one experiences a lack of emotions usually accompanies a thought disorder such as schizophrenia.

Second, Rutt mentions that a mood enhancer such as St.-John's-wort helps mild depression. But he failed to include a warning that if a person with bipolar disorder takes such a mood enhancer, it can make that person more susceptible to mania, which is often more life threatening than depression.

Third, even though I have seen electroconvulsive therapy used in beneficial ways, I am wary of its use. I once met a fellow who had received 200 ECT treatments before a U.S. senator ordered them stopped. As a result of ECT, this gentleman had to teach himself how to read and do math again.—*Phil Fuller, St. Paul, Minn.*

Thank you for the articles on mental health. It is good to see the mention of practicing faith, attending church, enjoying a good laugh and taking time for God. What about the tremendous healing power of worshipful music? The last recorded group activity of Jesus with his disciples before going to the Mount of Olives was singing a hymn (Matthew 26:30).

Our group worship today is different from that, of course, but surely the Lord is pleased with devout opening praises, worshipful hymns and heartfelt dynamics of a familiar doxology. They are a gracious encouragement along the pathway out of disappointment and discouragement into the way of deep peace and victory.

I learned from my widowed mother struggling through the depressing years of the 1920s and '30s. She maintained the wholesome spirit of "When I get discouraged, I sing." By singing prayers and praises to God in heaven, she maintained healthful harmony in her spirit on earth.—*Frank Horst, Warden, Wash.*

I would like to thank ya'll for the articles on mental illness and the church. Coming from one who suffers from bipolar disorder, those articles were refreshing and encouraging. This is even more so due to the fact that I feel

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The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available. The views expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent the official positions of *The Mennonite*, Interim Periodical Board, General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church or Mennonite Church USA.
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readers say

God calling me into the ministry. Please keep up the good work.—*Erica Collins, Todd, N.C.*

Sanctity of life

I appreciated the Oct. 24 article "Abortion's Other Victims" by Ruth Thiessen, which advocated showing compassion and forgiveness toward those who have mistakenly chosen abortion without compromising the position that we must affirm the sanctity of life in the unborn.

I was less comfortable with Rich Preheim's Wider World column in the same issue. He mentions that the Republican Party's Catholic Task Force says the GOP's positions are closer to the Catholic Church's. *National Catholic Reporter* disagrees, since U.S. House and Senate Democrats agree with Catholic positions on assault-weapons bans, minimum wage, easing trade restrictions on Cuba and aid to Vietnam. Other than the assault-weapons ban, none of these issues approaches the moral gravity of partial-birth abortion, which most Republicans in the U.S. House and Senate oppose, while most Democrats in the House and Senate support it.

If Christians are supposed to conclude that Democrats may be wrong to advocate partial-birth abortion, which kills helpless infants, but make up for this error by advocating a minimum wage and aid to Vietnam, this indeed is to advocate straining a gnat while swallowing a camel.—*Jerry C. Stanaway, Lombard, Ill.*

I commend you for printing "Abortion's Other Victims." This is a pertinent message for our church. I believe the number of those people suffering from the sequela of abortion among Mennonite people is greater than we imagine. This might be why we seem reluctant to address this vast area of violence and killing as a church.
—*David H. Clymer, Shirleysburg, Pa.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

A woman's place

Re "Saved Through Childbearing: The Pauline Logic of 1 Timothy 2:8-15" by Reta H. Finger (Oct. 17): The Greek word "authetein," translated as "authority," brings together two words meaning "self" and "thrust," thus to "thrust oneself." Language is dynamic. Word meanings change over time. Before 300 B.C., authetein referred to murder and suicide—to thrust a weapon into oneself or another. In the time of Paul, the meaning changed to "thrust oneself sexually." John Chrysostom translated 1 Timothy 2:12 as "I forbid a woman to teach and to engage in fertility practices with a man." Much later the word came to mean to thrust oneself in the sense of usurping authority. It is this later meaning we currently read back into Paul's instruction to Timothy, which was not his intention at all.

Paul wrote to Timothy in Ephesus, the center of worship of the fertility goddess Artemis (Acts 19:23-41). In this religion, it was common for female teachers to engage in sexual activities with students. Thus Paul warned that such activity should never occur in the church. This sheds light on the letter to Thyatira in which Jezebel "is teaching and beguiling my servants to practice fornication and to eat food sacrificed to idols" (Revelation 2:18-20).

It is sad that today some denominations, conferences and congregations are barring gifted women from church leadership and pastoral ministry on the basis of a mistranslation coupled with reading back into Paul's letter a meaning he never intended. In doing this, they overlook the significant roles that many women filled in the churches founded by the apostle. *—Paul M. Lederach, Lansdale, Pa.*

It is important to ask why the writer of 1 Timothy was so concerned that Christian women's roles reflect those of the pagan culture around them.

—Reta H. Finger, "Saved Through Childbearing: The Pauline Logic of 1 Timothy 2:8-15," Oct. 17

I just wanted to say amen to Finger's article. Her scholarship is sound and sheds much-needed light on this confusing and often misused text.*—Michael Danner, Roanoke, Ill.*

Proof positive

Re "Not by Giants or Heroes" by Ryan Ahlgrim (Oct. 3): A basic rule of philosophy is that you cannot start from a false premise and find truth. That has been our problem in finding answers to the hard questions in Genesis. We have been taught that science is suspect and evolution is evil. The fact is that science is a window through which we can see the beautiful hand of the Creator and find answers that are both scriptural and logical, even for Genesis 6:1-4.

In Genesis 1:27 and about 6,000 years ago, God performs his last and crowning creative act when he creates man in his own image, both spiritual and immortal. From among the human species God selects Adam and Eve. He breathes into them a breath of spiritual life, and they become living souls. Adam is clearly called a son of God in Luke 3:38. He and Eve reproduce the image of God—their spiritual selves—in their offspring. But Abel is dead and Cain has married outside the family. Flesh cannot reproduce spirit, so in Cain's lineage God's plan is stymied. Seth is born and can only marry his sister. In their lineage the spiritual image of God is continued.

In Genesis 6, the problem of intermarriage has become critical. The strife is between the spirit that God created and placed into Adam and man, who also is flesh. The generations of Cain are mighty and renown. God's creation of spiritual man is being squeezed out. Both cannot survive together. God has no choice but to eliminate the other side. In Genesis 6:9, Noah was chosen because "he was perfect in his generation."

The amazing thing of this whole story is this part of the Bible was written some 4,000 years ago, but just in our generation of technological advance, science has proved the absolute truth of Genesis.*—Jim Mullett, Wellston, Ohio*

Cheated

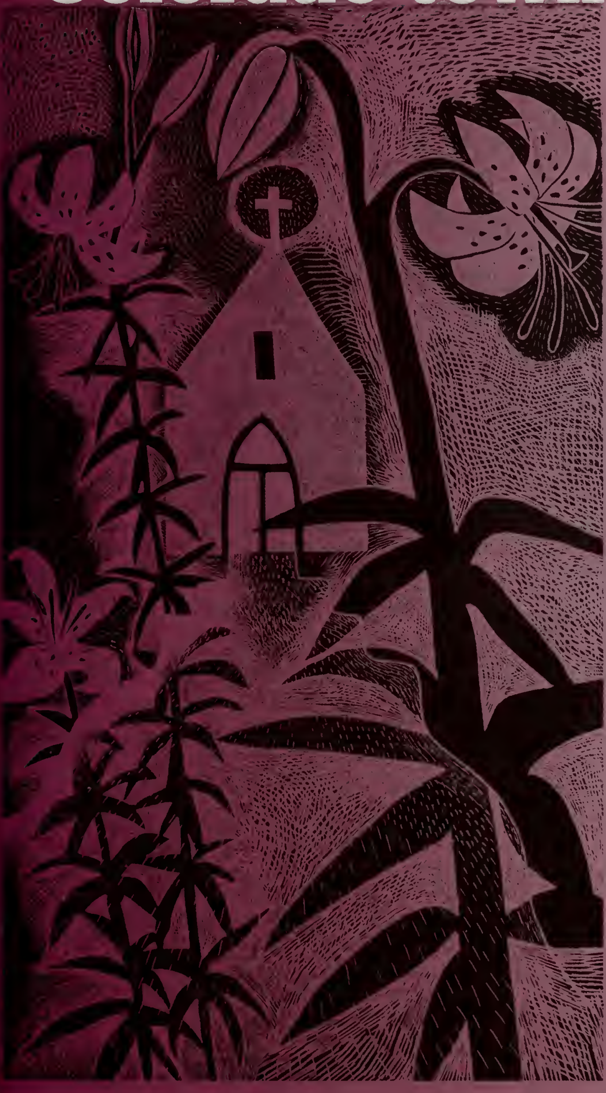
The "Difficult Texts of the Bible" series is instructive and helpful. However, to those of us who know no Greek or Hebrew and with only one author per article, would it not be wiser and fair to have a pro and con format? It no doubt would take a little effort to find a willing and erudite twosome to do this. When an author presents a strong, biased view to us who are not educated in biblical languages, it seems to me we are being cheated from a possible opposite view that is equally valid.*—Floyd Rheinheimer, Goshen, Ind.*

Unkind comment

Re the review of *Let All Who Thirst: Hymns for Piano* (Mediaculture, Oct. 17): If we are Anabaptist pacifists, how come words like "will disappoint those who want their hymns straight" are used? My husband just gave me this beautiful compact disc for my birthday, and I was enthralled. Why in the world did an emotional, negative word such as "disappoint" have to be used? Couldn't you have started with your positive ending and simply mention that these arrangements are a bit unlike straight hymns but have variations on our new worship book's hymns that we are getting to know better every year and coming to deeply appreciate. I fear you do not have much musical knowledge. Your comment cuts sales and is most unkind. *—M. Burkholder, Dillsburg, Pa.*

A forgotten Colorado town

by Ann Minter Fetters


Lora Jost

The Conquistadors have gone away
and so have the potato factories.
The Army now claims their youth.
They are left with dry desert to make a living,
Una's cafe,
two liquor stores
and a pay phone ringing
outside Bernie's Shearing Shack.
Everyone knows he peddles dope—
it's hard to feed a family of five
on $4 haircuts.

At the edge of town
tiger lilies circle St. Joseph,
his clean, white hands extended
in the garden of a sandstone parish,
its lawn groomed like a golf course.

Saturday nights, across the street,
they dance the salsa to a Santa Fe band.
The sheriff breaks up a rumble;
a young man gets stabbed anyway.

The next morning they walk the steps,
leaving cigarette butts at the door,
fingering plastic beads, lips moving,
weeping to Mary for mercy.
This, the one thing that is still theirs.

Ann Minter Fetters lives in Wichita, Kan.

The call to revea God's beauty

Artists are called to show the beauty God created in each human being.

by Ray Dirks

On Easter 1999, Pope John Paul II published a letter to artists. I know of no other document as important for Christian artists. It reveals the heart and purpose of Christian artists. One can read it on the Vatican web site: <www.vatican.va>.

The letter is addressed "to all who are passionately dedicated to the search for new epiphanies of beauty so that through their creative work as artists they may offer these as gifts to the world." The letter begins with, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good" (Genesis 1:31).

"None can sense more deeply," says the statement, "than you artists, ingenious creators of beauty that you are, something of the pathos with which God at the dawn of creation looked upon the work of his hands. A glimmer of that feeling has shone so often in your eyes when—like the artists of every age—captivated by the hidden power of sounds and words, colors and shapes, you have admired the work of your inspiration, sensing in it some echo of the mystery of creation with which God, the sole creator of all things, has wished in some way to associate you."

In our world of poverty, despair, war, crime, separated families, famine and sorrow, where is beauty? There is beauty in every human being created in the image of God.

Beauty comes up over and over again in the pope's letter. Beauty and goodness, beauty and nature, beauty and spirituality, beauty and incarnation, beauty and following God's call, beauty and mystery.

As an artist, I pursue issues I feel our wealth and comfort in North America permit us to ignore. In our world of poverty, despair, war, crime, separated families, famine and sorrow, where is beauty? There is beauty in every human being created in the image of God.

There is despair and beauty in a starving child hanging limp in its mother's arms. God's image is there. God is calling us, who have so much, to help restore that child to its full beauty. I have been fortunate to work in many African countries and recently in Cuba. I see abundant beauty in all these places.

I had a solo exhibition of my watercolors in a beautiful gallery in Old Havana in March. It was the home of one of Latin America's most renowned artists of the 20th century, the Ecuadorian Oswaldo Guayasamin. But by far the loveliest part of my experience was living with the people in the town of Bauta.

I stayed in a shack with thin, plank walls. Streams of light crisscrossed and dotted my room in the night. I had a bat as a roommate. Its circling overhead was a bit unnerving but, hey, it lived there before I did.

Truths and contradictions: The beauty of Bauta is that of materially poor people relying on one another and practicing community. The beauty of Cuba is in seeing people worshiping joyously in churches throughout the country. As an artist I am inspired. Where are the truths and contradictions of Cuba? How will I interpret the beauty and stay true to Christ and to my Cuban friends?

When I'm in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, my artist friend Tibebe Terffa and I like to go for walks in the evening. Some of the richest moments of my life have taken place while walking through the slums of Addis or high in the mountains at Lalibela, crossing cultural divides and linking spirits.

Early one evening, Tibebe and I set out for a walk. We crossed the busy main road and made our way to an Orthodox church. We watched people praying and coming and going. We set off again down the street. Heavy trucks lumbered by, spewing black diesel fumes. Taxis rattled past. We reached an empty field and suddenly traffic and pedestrians melted away.

In front of us was a small, stooped woman in torn, dirty rags. She was barefoot. Her walking stick sounded a constant tick, tick, tick on the pavement as she shuffled along.

The words of Matthew 25:35 ran through my mind: "I was hungry and you fed me. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was homeless and you gave me a room."

At moments like that I am happy to be an artist and not a theologian. I blurted out to Tibebe, knowing the woman could not understand English, "To me this woman could be Christ." He seemed a little taken aback.

We stayed close behind her, watching and wondering. We came to an intersection. We both glanced to the right checking for traffic. We looked left. The woman was gone. We had turned away for only a second.

I saw great beauty in that old woman. She,

Correction: The photos with the article about Nazareth Village in the Oct. 31 issue were taken by Wayne Gehman, not Tom Price.

like you and me, was made in the image of God. I believe God placed her there to make a point.

Perhaps our definition of beauty is messed up. It isn't in designer clothes, giant houses and new cars. It is in God's creation, which artists can interpret, explore and offer new insights on that we in a church tradition have missed. We must not worship art, but we have misunderstood churches, such as the Catholic Church, that hold art to be important.

My Catholic friends are appalled when someone suggests that their art is being worshiped. They say it points people beyond the subjects to the Almighty God.

As curator at the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg, I have sensed God pointing me toward a goal of helping artists find a place of relevance in the Mennonite church, combined with a personal calling to work with artists from the so-called developing world.

Tibebe and I just finished an art project with immigrant and refugee kids at Gordon Bell High School in Winnipeg. I found great beauty and joy in working with these young people, who recently arrived from Albania, Iraq, Vietnam, Korea, Sudan, Eritrea and other countries. Our goal was to help them integrate into Canada while feeling good about who they are.

Tibebe and I worked with them on two murals that will hang in their school cafeteria, to celebrate their beauty for the whole school to see.

Special touches from God: Artists, follow the true beauty to which God points you. Those who are not artists, try to understand the role God can have them play. I read the pope's words and wish we could hear the same from our church leaders, especially for those artists who feel the church offers them no home. Their passion is real. Their gifts are special touches from God.

"Consider artists as having a noble ministry when their works reflect in some way the infinite beauty of God and raise people's minds to him," says the pope's letter. "Thanks also to artists, the knowledge of God can be better revealed and the preaching of the gospel can become clearer."

He adds that "works of art, both literary and figurative, are not only aesthetic representations but genuine sources of theology."

John Paul II concludes, "On the threshold of the Third Millennium, my hope for all of you who are artists is that you will have an especially intense experience of creative inspiration. May the beauty you pass on to generations still to come be such that it will stir them to wonder. Faced with the sacredness of life and of the human person and before the marvels of the universe, wonder is the only appropriate attitude."

My hope for all of you who are artists is that you will have an especially intense experience of creative inspiration. May the beauty you pass on to generations still to come be such that it will stir them to wonder.—*John Paul II*

My prayer is that artists within our churches can find a relevant place among us to pursue the beauty God has called them to reveal. And perhaps on Easter Sunday 2001, all Mennonite conferences in North America will publish an affirming letter to artists. I can dream, can't I?

Ray Dirks is an artist and curator of the Mennonite Heritage Centre Gallery in Winnipeg. The above article is from a sermon given at Charleswood Mennonite Church in Winnipeg on June 4. A version of this article originally appeared in Canadian Mennonite.

The use of graphic design to build identity

by Ron Rempel

The most challenging assignment of his career is how graphic designer Glenn Fretz describes his involvement in creating the logo and visual identity for the emerging Mennonite Church in Canada and the United States.

When he was asked to join the project in February 1998, he realized that any symbol for the new church would have to represent not only an organization but the soul of a people—something that would be unique and fresh.

"I knew I couldn't please everyone," he says, although he also knew that a visual image must be open enough to accommodate the broadest number of people.

Whether to include a cross became one of the discussion points. Glenn brought a longstanding concern that the cross has been overused to represent too much.

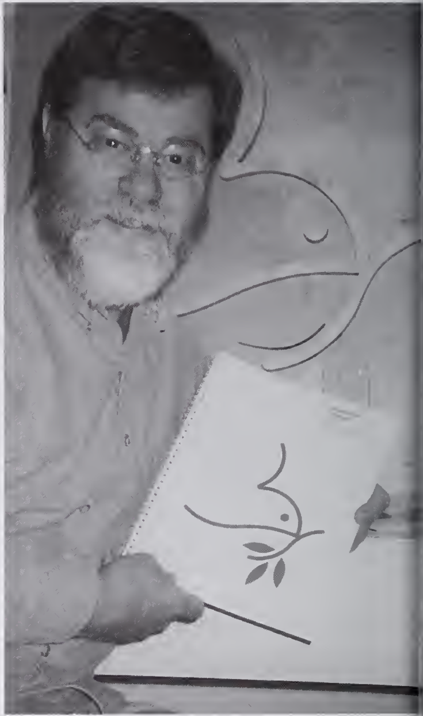
He was further sensitized to negative associations with the cross by someone he met who had experienced abuse. This person had expressed discomfort when asked at a retreat to lay her burden at the cross as a symbolic release—as though the burden could be released that simply.

The new symbol touches down at numerous places in salvation history: the themes of hope and creation (dove returning with olive branch); the prophetic vision for a peaceable kingdom, Jesus' baptism and Pentecost.

Glenn says he also questions the assumption that Christians need to "get over it and put it into the hands of God. … Not that I don't believe in forgiveness," he adds. "But in order to forgive, you have to have the authority to forgive."

He recalls that before denominational leaders decided on the new logo in February 1999, they also considered a version that included an inverted olive branch with its leaves in the form of a cross.

An interpretive statement by Helmut Harder, says Glenn, put into words his own intuitive reach for a symbol to accompany this historic opportunity for the church "to review and renew itself." Harder, then general secretary of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada, said the new symbol "touches down" at numerous places in salvation history: the themes of hope and creation (dove returning with olive branch), the prophetic vision for a peaceable kingdom, Jesus' baptism and Pentecost.


Deeper meanings, ultimately to unify: Glenn Fretz with a woodcut of the Mennonite Church logo and a guide for implementing the identity program.

The symbol "points us to God and the Holy Spirit," wrote Harder, "extending to us an invitation to move forward with Christ … encouraging us to aspire to a new heaven and a new earth."

After the St. Louis 99 assembly, when the Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church took further steps to merge, the new church contracted with Glenn for one year to help congregations and church organizations apply the new symbol. The contract has been extended through next August.

Glenn says he got at least 100 requests during this year and many votes of affirmation. "A couple have asked whether they could change the color," he says. "I encouraged them to use

The symbol for the new Mennonite Church presented a challenge for graphic designer Glenn Fretz.

the standards as they are. And I used this as a chance to explain what an identity program is all about."

His convictions about the role of graphic design in the church have developed over three decades. In the late 1960s, when he studied at the Ontario College of Art, graphic design was not a recognized discipline in Canada. The school had courses in advertising and illustration.

After working briefly in a university audiovisual department, Glenn got a job with a design consultant in Toronto. Developing a new logo for the Ontario government was one of his assignments. In 1975 he established his own design business in Toronto.

In 1998 he and his family moved to Waterloo, Ont., where he established a home-based office. This move was prompted in part by deteriorating eyesight, which has since been partly restored through corrective surgery.

Early efforts to apply his discipline in the church included designing *Mennonite Reporter* in 1971. Later he received an invitation to put together a visual design package for the Mennonite World Conference Assembly in 1978 in Wichita, Kan. Also he has worked on numerous church identity programs since then, alongside his many corporate clients.

"Sometimes graphic design gives very little," says Glenn. "Other times it has great potential to provide a nonverbal point of contact … to evoke deeper meanings, ultimately to unify."

Ron Rempel is editor of Canadian Mennonite.

Glenn is available to help conferences and congregations make use of the dove symbol on such things as church bulletins, stationery and signs. The logo can be sent electronically to local printers. There is no charge to congregations for this service. Congregations may contact Glenn Fretz at 519-883-4164 or by email at <gfretz@home.com>. The Communications Office of the General Conference Mennonite Church has visual identity booklets for congregations and agencies. Contact Cynthia Snider at P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114, 316-283-5100, <cynthias@gcmc.org>.

Communion

by Michael Martin

Saturday afternoon
my mother kneads the dough
for Sunday's Communion bread,
floured forearms
deep in the enamel dishpan.
Twice punched down
and covered with cloths,
it will rise again,
each time in yeasty overflowing.

Later she will trim the crusts
from the golden loaves;
slice long white rectangles
for my father and the bishop
to tear to pieces
and pass among the believers
while I watch from her side.

Tomorrow I know
I will taste the crusts and leavings
of today's remembrance
toasted with scrambled eggs.
For one must not be wasteful,
and our risen Lord
is always more than enough
for just one day.

Michael Martin is a Mennonite Central Committee worker in Guerrero, Mexico.

Paul M. Schrock

GCMC-MBM photo by Tom Price

Kenyetta Aduma of Mennonite Board of Missions (left) and Elizabeth Soto Albrecht of the Commission on Overseas Mission use their color-coded nametags to vote on the proposed mission system for the new Mennonite Church. MBM, COM, the Commission on Home Ministries and Mennonite Church Canada's Ministries Commission unanimously approved the plan Oct. 27.

Mission proposal emphasizes grass roots

All levels of church would be part of one mission system

EXCELSIOR SPRINGS, Mo.—Envisioning a new Mennonite Church and all its congregations "fully engaged in God's mission, reaching from across the street to around the world," mission board and commission representatives unanimously adopted plans Oct. 27 for a new approach to mission work.

The current mission structures in the United States and Canada will now seek to undergo a metamorphosis by February 2002. Instead of being the primary initiator of mission activity and supported by congregations, a new "organic mission system" will exist primarily to equip congregations for missions.

"There is a growing understanding that missions is not just one among many activities of the church, alongside Christian education, leadership training, mutual aid and others," according to a report on the vision, strategy and organization of the new mission structure. "Increasingly, [missions] is seen as embedded within the very character of the church,"

The plan was approved by the governing bodies of the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM), Commission on Overseas Mission (COM), Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and Mennonite Church Canada Ministries Commission during a three-day meeting at an Excelsior Springs retreat center last month. The decision concluded more than 18 months of study, consultation and feedback from across the church and marked the beginning of the transition and implementation phase.

The plan will now be sent to the U.S. and Canadian transformation teams and executive boards before going to the national delegate assemblies next year for approval.

"We hope [congregations] will begin to see missions not as the thing they add on but as the very driving energy to the congregation's life," said MBM president Stanley Green.

According to the proposed model, the new mission system will replace CHM, COM, MBM and the Ministries Commission while also collaborating with Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM)and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions (VMBM), two area conference-based mission agencies with substantial overseas programs.

Mennonite Church USA and Mennonite Church Canada will each have a national mission center, which will

- Have the primary roles in developing and articulating vision, creating a national mission strategy and leading the system
- Administer existing binational programs
- Provide resources via the Internet for congregations, conferences and other groups involved in mission activity
- Lead "roundtables" for consultation or program oversight, which could include mission associations (such as clusters of congre-

We hope [congregations] will begin to see missions not as the thing they add on but as the very driving energy to the congregation's life.

—Stanley Green

The MEDA Store

October 2000 . . . that all people may experience Christ's love and utilize their abilities to earn a livelihood, provide for families and enrich their communities

Our Mission is Working!

At Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), we believe the best way to help people escape poverty is to help them find work.

We do this by providing affordable loans, training and marketing assistance to businesses run by poor entrepreneurs. For them, the difference between earning enough to provide for their families and living in poverty is a loan of a few hundred dollars to buy a new machine, purchase inventory or put a roof on a market stall. But getting a loan isn't easy. Banks won't lend to people who are poor—they have little or no collateral. Their only option is a loan shark, which often leads to even greater impoverishment.

That's where MEDA comes in. Every year we create or sustain about 10,000 jobs around the world, including in North America, where we offer training to help low income people realize their dream of owning their own businesses. That's why we say: Our Mission is Working!

To "purchase" a product from the MEDA Store, mark the project name and number on your check. In return, you will receive a certificate noting how many shares you have purchased. To "purchase" a product by credit card, call MEDA at 1-800-665-7026 or visit the MEDA web site at www.meda.org All "purchases" from the MEDA Store are tax receiptable.

> ***"One of the greatest success stories in helping the world's poor is microloans. Millions of people have received tiny loans of $75, $200 or $500 so they can start small businesses and thus provide a better living for their families. MEDA has been a leader in this exciting movement."***
> Ron Sider, author, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* and advocate for poor people.

Send your contributions to: **(Canada): MEDA, 302-280 Smith St., Winnipeg, MB R3C 1K2**
(U.S.): 1821 Oregon Pike, Suite 201, Lancaster, PA 17601

Founded in 1953, MEDA is an association of about 3,000 North American Christians who seek to connect their faith and work in a needy world by providing hope, opportunity and economic well-being to low income people in the developing world and North America. For more information, call 1-800-665-7026 or visit www.meda.org

HELPING CHILDREN BY HELPING PARENTS

When Romania's Communist government collapsed in 1989, the terrible plight of abandoned children in that country came to world attention. The situation was alleviated through North American adoption. But a worsening economy has resulted in poor families once again giving away children to orphanages. MEDA is helping children in Romania by providing parents with loans to start or grow small businesses. Since 1997 over 500 loans have been made to 344 businesses, providing employment for over 2,700 people—jobs which mean families are able to look after their children. MEDA funds required: $37,000; $37 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Romania, MS #1.**

The "purchase" of shares from the MEDA Store does not constitute a legal offering; rather, it is a symbolic way for purchasers to participate in MEDA's efforts to help people in low income countries find hope, opportunity and economic well-being through a business-oriented approach to development.

OPEN, SESAME

In the 1980s, MEDA helped small cocoa bean producers in Haiti organize into cooperatives to improve crop yields, obtain better prices and find markets. Today the co-ops still operate and ship produce to top U.S. candy makers. Now MEDA would like to do the same thing in Nicaragua by helping small farmers who produce sesame seeds. The five-year project will help them create better seeds, explore organic production, add processing activities and find new markets. At the same time, MEDA will affirm and support women, who play a pivotal role in the production of this crop. MEDA funds required: $18,000; $18 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Sesame, MS # 2.**

HELPING WOMEN GROW AND START BUSINESSES

After Rehema Mwampondele's husband was killed during a robbery, the 27-year-old Tanzanian mother of two decided to take over his auto parts business. His family told her to sell the business, saying it wasn't appropriate work for a woman. But she had helped her husband in the shop, and he had shared with her the things he learned from training classes at MEDA's Mbeya Credit Facility. Rehema used a loan from MEDA to increase her profit by 50 percent. "It's unusual for a woman to run a business like this," she says, "but I felt I could do it." In the developing world, many women are responsible for providing for their families. However, they also face many obstacles to achieving financial self-sufficiency. MEDA wants to explore ways to help more women like Rehema through research and development programs. MEDA funds required: $60,000; $60 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Women, MS #3.**

HELPING LOW INCOME ENTREPRENEURS IN NORTH AMERICA

Janatt Vance likes to listen to people. The resident of Lancaster, Pa. also likes to cut and style hair. So it seemed natural enough to her to start a business which combines the two. But one thing she lacked was business training. Vance turned to MEDA's ASSETS program; today she has her own salon on a busy downtown street. "I love to do hair styling," she says. "I prayed about it, and felt God leading me to do hair styling. Through it, I can minister at the same time." She says ASSETS gave her confidence and "helped me with important things like bookkeeping, cash flow, legal issues—all the things I need to know to start and run a business." MEDA wants to help more low income entrepreneurs in North America to realize their dreams through its ASSETS programs. It costs $2,000 for one person to take the 25-session training course; $80 "buys" support for one session for a low-income entrepreneur. **Mark your check ASSETS, MS #4.**

Vance
IR DESIGN S

BOOSTING PRODUCTIVITY IN TANZANIA

When a large poverty alleviation program in Tanzania issued a call for metal pushcarts, Edward Shoo wanted to make a bid for the job. But where would he get the money to stock up on the components he needed? With help from a MEDA loan, he won the bid and made 20 metal carts. Edward says MEDA plays an important role in his success: "It's difficult for someone at my level to get credit at banks," he says. "They have lots of conditions that I find hard to meet." MEDA wants to help more people like Edward in Tanzania. To do this, MEDA needs to increase its loan capital and train local people to be managers. MEDA funds required: $125,000; $125 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Tanzania, MS #5.**

BREAKING THE CHAINS OF CHARITY

MEDA's goal is to help people escape the prison of poverty. But we also want to help them break the chains of charity. Most aid to people in low income countries today is in the form of grants and other free aid. Charity has its place, such as during disasters like floods, earthquakes, drought and storms. But too much charity can also cause problems, making recipients dependent on aid from North America and undermining local businesses. By lending small amounts of money to poor entrepreneurs, and by providing marketing assistance so they can sell their products, MEDA enables people who are poor to preserve their dignity and self-worth. They aren't getting handouts—they are working to improve their lives. Through research and development, MEDA wants to find more ways to help more people break the chains of charity. MEDA funds required: $60,000; $60 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Chains, MS #6.**

FEEDING AND EDUCATING CHILDREN IN MOZAMBIQUE

When pastor Antonio Nhancule of the Spirit of Charity Church in Maputo, Mozambique looked out over his fast-growing congregation, he saw that one of the greatest needs was for economic development. He approached MEDA with a request for loans to help members improve their small businesses. As a result, 30 people have received loans; pastor Antonio reports there is visible economic improvement among his members as a result of the program. "They are better able to feed their children and send them to school," he says. MEDA wants to help more poor people like the Spirit of Charity Church members improve their lives. MEDA funds required: $80,000; $80 "buys" one share of the program. **Mark your check Maputo, MS #7.**

REACHING OUT IN MEXICO

Small businesspersons in Mexico City have access to loans through local credit unions, but there is a need for good business training programs to help businesses succeed. Mennonites in Mexico City see this as a way to serve people in their community; they have asked MEDA to help them offer training based on MEDA's successful North American ASSETS model. The pilot phase will begin in 2001. MEDA funds required: $15,000; $15 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Mexico, MS #8.**

ALTERNATIVES TO GROWING DRUGS

In the mid-1990s, the U.S. government helped farmers in Peru grow new crops such as palm hearts, which are used in salads as a garnish, as an alternative to growing drugs. Many small farmers took advantage of the program. The problem is they can't get the crop to market, due to poor roads which damage the produce and cause frequent delays. As a result, over 60 percent of their crop is spoiled before arriving at the processor. Frustrated with such poor returns, some farmers are once again tempted by drug money. To prevent this, MEDA wants to help them establish a processing center close to their farms. The farmers themselves will invest $25,000 in the project. MEDA funds required: $40,000; $40 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Palm Hearts, MS #9.**

GONE FISHING

According to the old adage, "Give people fish and they eat for a day; teach them to fish and they eat for a lifetime." To that MEDA would add: "Give them a loan and they will set up a seafood restaurant." MEDA is helping fishers in Nicaragua set up a cooperative, explore marketing opportunities and offering business training so they can sell their own catch and obtain a fairer price. MEDA funds required: $18,000; $18 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Fish, MS #10.**

HELPING PEOPLE ACHIEVE THEIR DREAMS

In 1995, MEDA founded its ASSETS program to help low income entrepreneurs in North America realize their dreams of economic self-sufficiency by starting their own businesses. To date 695 people have received training, 528 have successfully finished the course, 128 businesses have been started, 167 businesses have been strengthened and 248 full and part time jobs have been created. MEDA wants to help more people achieve their dreams of economic self-sufficiency by starting new ASSETS programs in Canada and the U.S. Each program requires $17,600 in start-up funds; $176 "buys" one share of the start-up costs. **Mark your check Start-up, MS #11.**

HELPING ALLEVIATE ABUSE OF CHILD LABORERS

It's a fact of life in the developing world: children work. But no child should be abused or misused by employers. Preliminary research shows that children who work for their parents in small family-run businesses have better working conditions and educational opportunities. MEDA wants to work with other groups and the Canadian government to see if there are ways North Americans can help child workers by supporting small family-run businesses. The results of the research will be shared with other aid groups. MEDA funds required: $10,000; $10 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Child Labor, MS #12.**

ECO TOURISM

One of the fastest-growing tourism activities is ecotourism—visiting a country to learn more about its people and culture in an environmentally-friendly way. MEDA would like to help small entrepreneurs in Nicaragua who want to set up businesses which provide opportunities for North Americans and others to visit their country. MEDA funds required: $18,000; $18 "buys" one share of the project. **Mark your check Ecotourism, MS #13.**

HAITI VILLAGE BANKS

In the early 1980s, MEDA established a small bank in Port au Prince, Haiti called SHEC. Today it is one of that country's leading credit unions, with 5,000 members. MEDA wants to help more Haitian communities establish small banks, and provide business training to borrowers. MEDA funds required: $32,000; $32 "buys" one share of the program. **Mark your check Banks, MS #14.**

Sarona
Global Investment Fund

Put your savings to work to end poverty!

After Winnipegger Stuart Clark's father died, he received an inheritance in the form of investments in stocks. When he examined the funds, he discovered investments in companies he felt uncomfortable with—companies which had engaged in massive layoffs or objectionable environmental practices. He decided to invest the money in the Sarona Global Investment Fund, a socially responsible alternative investment fund which specifically benefits people in low income countries. "I liked it right away because it was more than just a place where I could avoid investing in things I disagreed with," he says. "It's a fund which allows my money to do something positive and useful."

The Sarona Global Investment Fund enables you to use your savings to make the world a better place. Other socially responsible funds help you avoid putting your money in places that you object to, like alcohol or tobacco manufacturers. But Sarona, which is part of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA), isn't just about keeping your savings away from things you don't agree with—it's a way to purposefully support ventures which seek to end poverty.

HOW IT WORKS

Sarona helps people in low income countries by:

1. **Providing capital to institutions which lend to the poor.** These are small micro-credit institutions which make loans to small businesses owned by poor people—businesses that are usually ignored by the commercial banking sector. Small loans like these often mean the difference between earning enough money to provide for their families and living in poverty.
2. **Investing in companies which benefit poor people.** These are companies in the agricultural and handicraft sectors that bring products made or grown by poor people to market. Some companies help small-scale producers join together to compete in local or international markets. Others have a goal of providing social and economic benefits to their employees and the surrounding community.

Sarona seeks out ventures that are both financially profitable as well as socially beneficial. Each investment is carefully screened to ensure its profitability and confirm it will have a positive economic impact in the local community. The goal is for both parties to this financial arrangement to benefit—people in low income countries and North American investors.

The fund is managed by MEDA Investments, Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA). In addition to individuals, larger investors in Sarona include Mennonite Mutual Aid and Calvert Foundation.

HOW CAN YOU PUT YOUR SAVINGS TO WORK THROUGH SARONA?

There are two ways to become involved:

1. **Invest in a promissory note/certificate.** Promissory notes from MEDA Canada (for Canadians) or certificates from Sarona (for U.S. residents) provide you with a fixed amount of interest for a fixed amount of time. Minimum purchase: $1,000.
2. **Donation.** Another way to make money available to help people through Sarona is by making a tax receiptable donation to MEDA, designating it to the Sarona Fund. It will be used to provide permanent capital to assist poor people.

For more information about investing in Sarona, contact:

Toll-free: **1-800-772-7662.**
Web site: **www.saronafund.com**
E-mail: **info@saronafund.com**
Address: **155 Frobisher Bay, Ste. 1-106,**
Waterloo, Ont. N2V 2E1

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gations or mission districts); other agencies, such as Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Economic Development Associates and Mennonite World Conference; and international church partners and mission agencies.

In addition to the national mission centers will be a series of grass roots-initiated regional centers that would develop new programs on behalf of the entire denomination. Regional centers would be embedded in area conferences and even congregations. The centers would also include EMM and VMBM, which will remain independent, according to the model.

"This is a win-win document," said EMM president Richard Showalter, a member of the team that developed the plan. "It's good for [EMM], and it's good for the whole church. There are multiple options for engagement not only for EMM but for other mission organizations and agencies in an organic mission system."

Said team chair and COM executive secretary Ron Flaming: "We're quite interested in trying to think of a future that has more collaboration and working together with folks involved in Mennonite missions in a broader sense."

The Mennonite Church USA mission structure would be directed by a 13-member board —seven members selected by denominational delegates and six appointed by the Executive Board. The Executive Board appointees would include representatives from regional mission centers. In Canada, the board would consist of area conference representatives.

Also at the meeting, CHM, COM, MBM and the Ministries Commission appointed full-time staff to direct the mission transformation process in each country: Ministries Commission executive secretary Jack Suderman and Erwin Rempel, former COM executive secretary and current director of development and church relations. A search for a Mennonite Church USA mission executive director was also started.

Some mission leaders called the proposal miraculous, given the level of disagreement that had existed. "A year ago, I would have expected that the best we could come up with was a negotiated consensus and, at worst, a political compromise," Suderman said. "I had not anticipated that these ... agencies would come out and say, 'We are united, unanimous,' but that's what they did."

CHM chair Jim Amstutz was a member of a mission integration task force that met twice in 1996 before disbanding. "People on the same mission board staff couldn't agree," he said. "It's memorable how we are sitting here ... in agreement, and we have been transformed. [The mission executives] have put their own agendas aside to put God's mission future and the mission future of the new Mennonite Church in front of us."

Said CHM executive secretary Lois Barrett: "You can't predict the Holy Spirit or ask for a command performance. You just have to have faith that the Spirit will work."—*GCMC and MBM news services*

GCMC·MBM photo by Tom Price

Erwin Rempel dons a hard hat given him by staff in preparation for his new six- to nine-month assignment as transition leader for the Mennonite Church USA mission agencies. Rempel had been director of development and church relations for the Commission on Overseas Mission.

India focus of Indiana prayer meeting

GOSHEN, Ind.—Through spoken word, singing, Scripture, storytelling and silence, Christians in Indiana prayed Oct. 17 for Christians in India who are facing persecution for their faith. They also celebrated the growth of the church despite opposition.

The prayer service, held at Berkey Avenue Mennonite Church in Goshen and planned by Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), gathered 30 people with a variety of connections to India: former mission workers, children of mission workers, Indian Mennonites, Indians living in the United States and other friends of India.

"This evening we've come together to remember the Christians in India who are facing a time now of persecution ... in a society that hasn't necessarily thought of itself as a society where persecution takes place," said John F. Lapp, West Asia and Middle East administrator for MBM and the Commission on Overseas Mission.

"Give them courage to face persecution," prayed Florence Nafziger, an MBM worker in India from 1945 to 1984. "Set their souls on fire, that they will spread your word to friends, neighbors and family."

Special guests at the service included Jai Prakash Masih, a Mennonite pastor, teacher and administrator from India, who gave an overview of church growth in his native country. He said the church is alive despite the persecution.

"Persecution is a reaction to what the gospel is achieving—and achieving very fast," Masih said.

In addtion to violence and crime, he said there are covert forms of persecution, such as discriminating against Christian youth in university placements. But Masih said the biggest problem for the church is not persecution but disunity within the church, especially between ethnic groups.—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

Correction: Due to a typographical error, a quote by Orval Shank was wrong in "Stewardship Educators Come to the End of the Road After Seven Years of Volunteer Travel and Speaking" in the Oct. 31 issue. The correct quote is, "Stewardship is now less utilitarian and obligation oriented."

North Americans, Syrians forge bonds of peace as MCC choir visits region rife with hostilities

AMMAN, Jordan—It was either the best or worst possible time for a group of North Americans to travel to the Middle East. As Israeli-Palestinian violence repeatedly flared and tensions rose, a 22-member Mennonite choir visited the region Oct. 3-20.

Invited by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) and the Middle Eastern Council of Churches (MECC), the group came to celebrate the new millennium with Syrian Christians. Their theme, "Praising the Christ of Peace," was timely.

"Syrians are very concerned about peace," says choir member Roseanne Andres of Regina, Sask. "Even small children we met were able to verbalize, 'We want peace.' "

Adds her husband, Walter, "We were singing about peace, and I hope people understood."

The choir spent the first 10 days in Syria, giving concerts in eight churches, including Syrian Orthodox, Greek Orthodox, Anglican and Presbyterian. The visit was the brainchild of Eldon Wagler and Jane Emile Wagler, MCC workers in Syria, and Samer Laham of the MECC as a novel way to bring together Christians of the East and West.

"It was wonderful to realize how much we have in common with the Orthodox church," says Alice Suderman of North Newton, Kan. "While it's easy to get hung up on our differences, we share the belief that Christ is the center of our faith. That makes us brothers and sisters."

"It is beautiful that we have so many things in common," agrees Syrian bishop Yuhanna Ibrahim. "There is also beauty in diversity."

For six days during the choir's stay in Syria, anti-American protesters staged demonstrations in Damascus. At the same time, Eldon Wagler observes, Syrian Christians received the North Americans with graciousness. "It says something about the generosity of the human spirit when it is granted some distance from national political constraints," he says.

The choir's visit to the region was supposed to end with several days in Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Gaza. But that leg was canceled due to the ongoing unrest in Palestine. Instead, the choir spent that time in Jordan, visiting historic sites and becoming acquainted with MCC's work in the country.—*Deborah Fast for MCC News Service*

CPTers get new view of West Bank clash

Two Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) members in the West Bank saw the current Israeli-Palestinian violence from the inside out on Nov. 2, spending the night in a Palestinian family's home in a Hebron neighborhood that has been the target of heavy gunfire by Israeli forces.

The family of the house where Andrew Gettman and Dianne Roe stayed had blocked most of the windows with stone and cement. The remaining windows had countless bullet holes. Dresses and sweaters on a clothes tree were full of bullet holes. There were no guns in the house.

Gettman and Roe reported three cases where local Israeli forces fired first, saying this contradicts Israeli contentions that they fire only in response to Palestinian attacks and only on homes sheltering gunmen.

In a letter to the Israeli Defense Force prior to spending the night, the CPT members in Hebron said, "We believe that collective punishment against a whole people, whether they be Israeli or Palestinian, is morally wrong."—*CPT News Service*

Young adults call for place in new church

CASSOPOLIS, Mich.—The place for young adults in the new Mennonite Church includes a binational fellowship and all denominational boards, including the top ones, 43 U.S. and Canadian young adults decided during an Oct. 6-8 meeting at Camp Friedenswald, Cassopolis.

The group affirmed a proposal to create a young adult fellowship to encourage and assist young adults in becoming part of the denominational structures and help them network with each other. The proposal also suggests that a staff person for young adult ministries be lodged within the proposed Congregational Life office of Mennonite Church USA but serving both the United States and Canada.

The proposal also calls for at least two young adults on the Mennonite Church USA Executive Board and Mennonite Church Canada General Board. Furthermore, young adults should be on all denominational boards and peppered throughout all institutions.

Young adult responsibilities had been lodged with the Young Adult Reference Council (YARC) in the General Conference Mennonite Church and the Young Adult Network (YAN) in the Mennonite Church. The two organizations have held joint meetings since the early 1990s.

"The future of YARC and YAN as entities in the new denomination will inevitably change. The question is what they will change into," says Ken Hawkley, director for young adult and adult education for the General Conference Mennonite Church. "That was part of our reason for this weekend—to see what the future of young adult ministry can look like and how young adults can be a part of the emerging new denomination."

For further refinement, the proposal will be presented to the U.S. and Canadian transformation teams and to the U.S. Executive Board and Canadian General Board.

Meeting participants also heard about the proposed involvement of young adults at next year's U.S. and Canadian church gatherings and heard explanations of some of the emerging structures for the new denomination.
—*Melanie Zuercher*

EMM photo by Dale D. Gehman

A choir from Emmanuel Worship Center leads traditional Ethiopian worship during the Oct. 7 dedication of the New York City congregation's new facility—a former nightclub. The congregation, now predominantly Ethiopian, wants to plant churches in all five boroughs of the city.

Old New York bar now serves living water

Move is part of Ethiopian congregation's vision to grow

NEW YORK—After 11 years of worshiping in Presbyterian, Baptist and Methodist church buildings in New York City, the Lancaster Conference-affiliated Ethiopian Evangelical Church has decided to belly up to the bar.

From morning to evening on Oct. 7, guests flooded into the congregation's new home, a former bar and nightclub in the Bronx, to dedicate the transformed facility. The 1922 building, now called Emmanuel Worship Center, has become "a place where God is honored," said pastor Mulugeta Abate.

With a price tag of $172,862, the move was a huge leap of faith. The group had saved $70,000 for a building when the old nightclub became available for purchase. In two months, the congregation raised an additional $60,000 to cover the deposit and closing costs.

During the Oct.7 dedication service, Abate told how the money came at great personal sacrifice. "Some gave their gold earrings and necklaces, even engagement rings," he said. "Others donated entire paychecks and cars. One person gave the money he had saved for his wedding."

After finalizing the purchase two months ago, church members worked six days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. to prepare the building for dedication and occupancy.

"Everyone worked on the building," Abate said. "Some took off work to help. Others came after work and school to help in the evenings. Still others cooked for the workers. It was hard work, but we learned new skills and formed a stronger bond with each other."

Abate said the mostly Ethiopian congregation's founders had originally hoped to locate in midtown Manhattan to be more accessible to the Ethiopian community. But during the past decade, as attendance has grown to about 140, the vision has also grown to include the community beyond those of Ethiopian origin. As a result, the congregation changed its name from Ethiopian Evangelical Church to Emmanuel Worship Center.

Abate is convinced that God has called them to plant churches in all five boroughs of the city. "We used to just reach out to Ethiopians," he said. "But God has opened our eyes to see people from every nation in this city. Our vision is to establish an international church that will birth other churches. If an ethnic church doesn't move beyond its own kind, to minister to the multiethnic world in which it lives, it will die."

Emmanuel Worship Center holds two Sunday worship services, a morning service in English and an afternoon service in Amharic.

During the dedication ceremony, Monroe Yoder, one of Lancaster's New York City bishops, commended the congregation for redeeming a building that had been "trashed."

"We know that people are set free by the presence of Jesus," Abate said. "Our people have a heart to share the love of God with the homeless and the needy of our city. We want to touch the same fire the early church and the Anabaptists touched, and carry it to the rest of the world. It's like wildfire—unstoppable." *—EMM News Service*

Retired ministers have last ENCOR

In the mid-1980s, a study found that retired ministers in the Indiana-Michigan Conference felt they had been put on the shelf. In response, the conference gave those retirees an ENCOR.

ENCOR, or Encouraging Network Calling on Retirees, linked volunteer ministers with retired pastors in the conference.

But organizers say the retirement agenda is now different from what it once was, and so ENCOR was disbanded this fall.

During the program's life, 30 ENCOR volunteers served 261 retirees, providing visitation, friendship, support and a connection to the conference.—*Gospel Evangel*

by the way ...

The last Dutch Mennonite martyr died in 1574. —*An Introduction to Mennonite History* by C.J. Dyck

New Mother book honored for 500,000 copies sold

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—Herald Press has been honored by the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association for the sale of more than 525,000 copies of its book *Meditations for the New Mother* by Helen Good Brenneman.

The association presented the Gold Book Award Nov. 4 at its fall meeting in New York City. The award is given to publishers of books that exceed the 500,000 mark in sales.

First published in 1953, *Meditations for the New Mother* ranked sixth on Herald Press' 1999 best-seller list. Nearly 250,000 copies have been sold of *Meditations for the Expectant Mother,* a companion book also written by Brenneman.

EMU names new vice president

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Shirley B. Yoder, a former Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) executive, has been named vice president for enrollment and marketing at Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) in Harrisonburg, starting Dec. 1.

Yoder will oversee the departments of admissions, financial assistance and communications. She succeeds Beryl H. Brubaker, who was named to the new EMU position of provost in July.

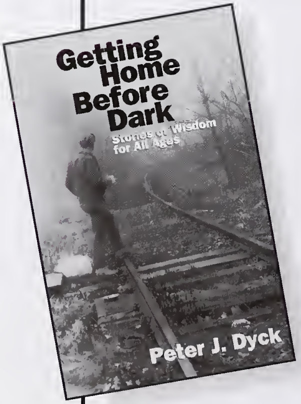
Yoder had been with MMA from 1989 until this past spring, serving as vice president of human resources and vice president of health services. She has also been on the nursing faculty at Goshen (Ind.) College and served with Church World Service.

Yoder is a 1974 EMU graduate and holds a master's degree in public health from the University of Pittsburgh.

Children in Vietnam get MCC school kits

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee has provided school kits for 3,000 Vietnamese children ages 3 to 5 in Binh Xuyen District, northwest of Hanoi. The kits, different from typical MCC school kits, were assembled in Vietnam and contain pencils, number and alphabet sets, notebooks and modeling clay. —*MCC News Service*

Stories of Wisdom for All Ages



Life is exciting and rewarding, full of challenge and frustration. Yet suddenly more than half is gone, and we have done so little.

In these meditations for all ages, **Peter J. Dyck** shares stories and insights from his wealth of experience, helping refugees, building peace, and challenging audiences. He especially promotes intergenerational family life.

With all our efforts, he says, we eventually learn that our greatest satisfaction comes from relationships with other people. We often fail and need forgiveness. With Paul, we confess that we see only "in a mirror, dimly" and "know only in part." We look forward to knowing fully when we see our Lord "face-to-face." Meanwhile, the greatest grace is love.

Paper, 272 pages, $14.99; in Canada $22.29

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Events

Youth Ministry: Practicing the Presence of God seminar, Jan. 19-20, 2001, at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS), Elkhart, Ind. For registration information, contact Bev Sawatzky at 219-296-6207 or 800-964-2627; email <bsawatzky@ambs.edu>.

Symbol and Ritual in Worship workshop, Jan. 26-27, 2001, sponsored by Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church. The workshop will feature Marlene Kropf and Ken Nafziger and a Saturday night hymnsing. For registration information, contact the church at 503-234-0559; email <pmcpastr@teleport.com>.

AMBS Pastors' Week, Jan. 29-Feb. 1, 2001, at AMBS in Elkhart, Ind., focusing on spiritual healing led by presenters Walter Wink and June Keener Wink. For information on this and other Pastors' Week activities, contact Bev Sawatzky at 219-296-6207 or 800-964-2627; email <bsawatzky@ambs.edu>.

Workers

Detweiler, Tim, Washington, Iowa, has begun as east regional minister for Central Plains Mennonite Conference.

Diller, Rodney D., Goshen, Ind., has been named senior vice president of trust services and of Mennonite Foundation. He will also serve as chief executive officer and president of the new Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA) Trust Company.

Dutchersmith, Kent, Goshen, Ind., has concluded five years as a staff person with Mennonite Board of Missions.

Hague, Barth A., Goshen, Ind., has been named executive director and chief marketing officer for Mennonite.net.

Jantz, Tim, has been named marketing manager for Mennonite.net. He also continues as MMA marketing services staff.

Sherer, Michael, has been named director of development for Mennonite.net. He also is director of computing services for Goshen (Ind.) College.

Births

Bontrager, Seth Allen, Oct. 22, to Greg and Melody (Wiens) Bontrager, Newton, Kan.

Bontrager, Sydney Leah, Oct. 17, to Craig and Karen (Stutzman) Bontrager, Milford, Neb.

Flory, Renee Paris, Oct. 1, to Ella and Gary Flory, Mount Crawford, Va.

Miller, Jeremy James, Oct. 17, to Herman Jr. and Jennifer Miller, Columbiana, Ohio.

Miller, Michael Scott, Oct. 24, to K. J. (Fulcher) and Michael Miller, Nampa, Idaho.

Nord, Joel Tobias, Sept. 28, to Andrea (Nafziger) and Eric Nord, Honduras.

Renner, Caitilyn Brenda, Aug. 30, to Angie (McDaniel) and Chris Renner, Pandora, Ohio.

Shertzer, Tanner Doyle, Oct. 22, to Todd and Twila (Fisher) Shertzer, Lancaster, Pa.

Marriages

Boschmann/Miller: Eric Boschmann, Elkhart, Ind., and Jennifer Miller, Elkhart, Sept. 3 at First Mennonite Church, Indianapolis.

Byler/Edwards: Donna Byler, Phoenix, and John Edwards, Phoenix, Oct. 20 at Sedona, Ariz.

Cain/Crossgrove: Jim Cain, Angola, Ind., and Maria Crossgrove, Angola, Oct. 21 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

Gross/Shisler: Hiram Gross, Souderton, Pa., and Carol Shisler, Harleysville, Pa., Oct. 7 at Salford Mennonite Church, Harleysville.

Hostetter/Kropf: Marla Hostetter, Pennsburg, Pa., and Jesse Kropf, Harleysville, Pa., Sept. 9 at Harleysville.

Liles/Smoker: Jennifer Liles, Chicago, and Phillip Smoker, Chicago, Sept. 30 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury, Ind.

Maury/Mullet: Cindy Maury, Milford, Neb., and Thurman Mullet, Berlin, Ohio, Oct. 21 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Rheinheimer/Young: Linda Rheinheimer, Middlebury, Ind., and Michael Young, Elkhart, Ind., Sept. 23 at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.

Deaths

Dickhut, Donald, 75, Sterling, Ill., died Oct. 23 of a stroke. Spouse: (1st) Pauline Ebersole Dickhut (deceased); (2nd) Carol Erb Wade Dickhut. Parents: Carl and Elda Cate Dickhut (deceased). Other survivors: children Cheryl Frank, Barry; stepchildren Pam Quiring, Kevin Wade, Brent Wade; 11 grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 27 at Science Ridge Mennonite Church, Sterling.

Hartzler, Ellwyn, 78, Pandora, Ohio, died Oct. 20. Spouse: Ruth Soldner Hartzler. Parents: R. L. and Nora Burkholder Hartzler (deceased). Other survivors: children Tim, Alan, Jan Buerge, Judy, Sandi Hostetler; 10 grandchildren. Memorial service: Nov. 4 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Hornberger, Albert, 70, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 17. Funeral: Sept. 24.

Householter, Earl, 84, Eureka, Ill., died Oct. 19. Spouse: Velda Householter. Parents: Peter and Laura Sauder Householter (deceased). Other survivors: children Eldo, Mahlon, Rita Guth; 10 grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 23 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Kauffman, Naomi Albrecht, 71, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 13. Spouse: Joe Kauffman (deceased). Parents: Alvin and Mollie Schrock Albrecht (deceased). Survivors: children Cindy, Becky Kasper, Debby McKenzie, Sanford, Stephen; five grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 16 at East Goshen Mennonite Church. Memorial service: Oct. 21 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston, Kan.

Kuhns, Verlin, 74, La Junta, Colo., died Oct. 22 of acute leukemia. Spouse: Alma Miller Kuhns. Parents: Joseph and Emma Kuhns (deceased). Other survivors: children Julie Stutzman, Bruce; three grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 26 at Emmanuel Mennonite Church, La Junta.

Kulp, Walter, 90, Sellersville, Pa., died Oct. 24 of biliary carcinoma. Spouse: Dorothy Kulp. Parents: Abraham and Ella Kulp (deceased). Other survivors: children Carol Gosart, Scott; five grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 28 at Blooming Glen (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Martin, Naomi Kuhns, 78, Chambersburg, Pa., died Sept. 20 of a heart attack. Spouse: Nelson Martin. Parents: Samuel and Martha Horst Kuhns (deceased). Other survivors: children Arvid, Yvonne, Twila Kraus, Freda Witmer; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 23 at Cedar Grove Mennonite Church, Greencastle, Pa.

Schaublin, Ormel, 85, Pandora, Ohio, died Oct. 15. Spouse: Ruth Schumacher Schaublin. Parents: Waldo and Jemina Emans Schaublin (deceased). Other survivors: children Mark, Maurice, Barbara Lyga, Joan Reese; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 18 at Grace Mennonite Church, Pandora.

Schwartz, Sam, 74, Glendale, Ariz., died Oct. 20. Spouse: Emma Schwartz (deceased). Parents: John and Barbara Schwartz (deceased). Survivors: children Lester, Sherman, Myrna, Ricky, Brian; 11 grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 25 at Trinity Mennonite Church, Glendale.

Sharp, Crist, 84, Belleville, Pa., died Oct. 8. Spouse: (1st) Bertha Good Sharp (deceased); (2nd) Malinda Kauffman Sharp. Parents: Joseph and Fannie Detweiler Sharp (deceased). Other survivors: children Ruth Himmelreich, Emma, Raymond, Norman, Paul, Duane, Joseph, Nancy Litwiller, Melvin, Mary Cardin; 28 grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 13 at Buffalo Mennonite Church, Lewisburg, Pa.

Stuckey, Norma Blaker, 83, Archbold, Ohio, died Oct. 7. Spouse: Ralph Stuckey (deceased). Parents: William and Myrtle Blaker (deceased). Survivors: children Donald, Larry, David, Sandra Galdenetz; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 11 at Lockport Mennonite Church, Stryker, Ohio.

White, Esther Kuhns, 81, Hesston, Kan., died Oct. 14. Spouse: Allen White. Parents: Samuel and Mary Horst Kuhns (deceased). Other survivors: children Paul, Stanley, Mahlon; five stepsons; 18 stepgrandchildren; 13 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 17 at Whitestone Mennonite Church, Hesston.

Wright, Paul Jr., 46, Wooster, Ohio, died Oct. 13 from an auto accident. Spouse: Rose Ann Yoder Wright (deceased). Parents: Paul and Virginia Wright. Other survivors: children Nigel, Kiernan. Memorial service: Oct. 20 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Wright, Rose Ann Yoder, 48, Wooster, Ohio, died Oct. 13 from an auto accident. Spouse: Paul Wright Jr. (deceased). Parents: Richard and Rosalie Hooley Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Nigel, Kiernan. Memorial service: Oct. 20 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio.

Yoder, Rosalie Hooley, 77, Orrville, Ohio, died Oct. 13 from an auto accident. Spouse: Richard Yoder (deceased). Parents: Orlando and Clara Hooley (deceased). Survivors: children Gretchen Christopher, Christina Buckwalter, Amy Murray, Richard, Jeremiah; 14 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 20 at Oak Grove Mennonite Church, Smithville, Ohio.

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  Send resume to Emanuel Gingerich, HC 62 Box 221, Lowville, NY 13367-9115; email <emanuel@beavercamp.org>.

- **All God's Children**, a history of ***100 years of planting churches*** and witnessing for God in Philadelphia by Eastern Mennonite Missions; published in 2000 by the Philadelphia District of the Mennonite Church. Writers: Jeff Gingerich and Miriam Stoltzfus. $14.95/$1.50 postage. 82 pages and over 100 pictures. An excellent Christmas gift.

  Order from Miriam Stoltzfus, 2063 Hill Rd., Perkiomenville, PA 18074.

- **Zion Mennonite Church** seeks the following:

  Coordinator of congregational life: Oversee the day-to-day operation of the church office in administrative tasks and maintain the focus of the staff and congregation on its vision, its mission and its goals through effective planning, communicating and delegating. This person must be a skilled people person, have good computer skills, be a good communicator and enjoy a challenge. Office management experience a plus. Flexible salaried position with a minimum 30 hrs/wk expected.

  Clerical assistant: Assist the coordinator of congregational life, all office staff and church committees in their daily clerical tasks. This person will perform various tasks such as being a receptionist in the office, phone-answering, typing, computer entries, filing, formatting documents. Must have good people skills, be able to work well with computers, have good organizational skills and be flexible. Hours are flexible, with 15 hr/wk expected.

  Resumes for either position should be forwarded to: Ron Price, c/o Zion Mennonite Church, 149 Cherry Lane, PO Box 64495, Souderton, PA 18964; email <PriceR@univest.net>.

President
Bethel College

The Bethel College Board of Directors announces the search for a ***president*** to succeed Douglas A. Penner, who will be completing a successful six-year tenure as Bethel president in the summer of 2001.

The board seeks a president who will articulate the distinctiveness and core values of Bethel College in a way that cultivates community, builds resources, strengthens Bethel's relationship with its constituencies, and attracts exceptional students, faculty and staff. The board seeks a president who will energetically lead the college as it strives to be a diverse community of learners and teachers, dedicated to an environment of faith, ethic of service and commitment to excellence.

Bethel College is a four-year liberal arts college with majors in the traditional disciplines and selected career and accredited professional programs. It is located in North Newton in south central Kansas. The college maintains a residential environment designed to foster integrative learning experiences and the building of meaningful relationships among its students, faculty and staff.

Founded in 1887, Bethel College is the oldest Mennonite college in North America. By tradition and by choice, Bethel continues to base its mission on its Anabaptist and academic identity. Bethel is a self-governing corporation with a close and active relationship to the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church USA.

The board of directors invites nominations and expressions of interest until the position is filled. The president is expected to assume duties during the summer of 2001 or as soon after as is practicable. The Presidential Search Committee will begin the review of candidates in December 2000.

Nominations and expressions of interest should be submitted to E. LaVerne Epp, Chair, Presidential Search Committee, Bethel College, 300 E. 27th, North Newton, KS 67117; email <Lepp@rmc1.com>.

All applications, nominations and inquiries will be received and processed in a confidential and professional manner. Bethel College is an equal-opportunity employer.

- **Wooster Mennonite Church** is seeking a half-time ***youth pastor*** Candidates must have a strong commitment to Christ and to Anabaptist beliefs as well as an excitement to see young people follow Christ.

  For more information, please contact or send resume to Wooster Mennonite Church, 1563 Beall Ave., Wooster, OH 44691; email <WoosterMC@sssnet.com>.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 school accredited by Association of Christian Schools International and Middle States Association and accountable to local churches, seeks a ***chief administrator*** committed to Jesus Christ and Christian education. Teaching and administrative experience preferred. School located in eastern Lancaster County, 50 miles west of Philadelphia. Position available spring/summer 2001.

  Send resume to Search Committee, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; fax 610-286-0350.

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classifieds

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., seeks applicants for ***director of alumni relations and communications:*** Cultivate relationships with alumni, support advancement activities, coordinate all forms of communication for Western. Excellent communication skills with a strong interest in marketing and public relations are required.

  Contact Darrel White, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

- **Holmes County Victim Offender Reconciliation Program** (VORP) is hiring a new full-time ***director***. Responsibilities include church, court and community relations, fund raising, case management and mediation. Position includes a quarter-time focus on a county school truancy mediation program.

  Please send resumes as soon as possible to Holmes County VORP, 5395 TR 336, Millersburg, OH 44654. Questions about the position may be directed to Diane Stromme Mast, 330-674-7070; or to Lynette Miller, 330-674-7514, or any board member.

- **Conrad Grebel College**, a residence and teaching facility affiliated with the University of Waterloo, seeks a married couple for the position of ***senior residents***, beginning May 1, 2001. The role involves living in an apartment in the college's residence building and supervising the college during nonbusiness hours. Rent and utilities are free in exchange for performance of duties. Applicants should be mature, responsible and able to relate to a broad range of people, especially students in residence.

  If interested, contact E. Paul Penner, CGC Operations Manager, 519-885-0220 ext. 231. Application deadline is Nov. 24, 2000.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***youth pastor*** who will join the current pastoral team. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. Located in southeastern Pa., Montgomery County, Franconia has an exciting and growing jr. and sr. high youth program.

  Interested people should send their resume to Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email <info@franconiamennonite.org>.

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants in ***business/management*** with expertise in human resources, management and organization behavior for a tenure track position in the economics and business administration department, beginning fall 2001. Doctorate (or ABD) in business administration, management, organization behavior, human resources management or industrial/organizational psychology. Course load, based on the successful candidate's interests, will include graduate and undergraduate teaching. Consideration of applications will begin Jan. 15, 2001, and continue until an appointment is made. Bluffton College is a growing, Mennonite-related college committed to and shaped by that historic peace church's traditions (see <http://www.bluffton.edu>).

  Send letter of interest, vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

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by Gordon Houser

Think about where you live. If you've lived in that location for a long time, think about how your beliefs, your view of the world, of yourself and how you approach life are affected by that location. If you think it's had no effect on you, you are mistaken.

While anthropologists, sociologists and geographers tell us how place influences us, so do writers and artists. Novelists create worlds tied to a specific, if fictional, place, whether it's Dickens' London or Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County, Miss.

Last month I attended a conference called "Habitations of the Word: Art and the Spiritual Ecology of Place," sponsored by *Image: A Journal of the Arts & Religion* and held in Seattle. Meeting in conjunction with the Conference on Christianity and Literature, the 100 or so participants heard papers on a variety of literary subjects: "Willa Cather's Southwest," "Paganism, Christianity and Heresy in the Modern Religious Novel," "Sacred Places and Spiritual Autobiography," "Sacred Places in Contemporary Canadian Fiction," "Religion and the Postmodern Novel," "Violence and Redemption in Three Modern Masters," "The City as Sacred Space," "Alternative Space for the Female Spirit," "Absence and Transcendence in 20th-Century Poetry," "Scripture and Place in American Poetry" and more.

Participants also heard presentations by composer Robert Kyr, sculptor Roger Feldman, painter Melissa Weinman, novelists David James Duncan, Hwee Hwee Tan and Oscar Hijuelos and writer Eugene Peterson, who gave the sermon at the Sunday morning worship service.

One presentation, by Maryann Tjart Janzen, discussed Kathleen Norris' *Dakota* and Sharon Butala's *The Perfection of Morning*. In these nonfiction books, Janzen said, the authors' relocation to sparse, prairie landscapes led to new views of self. "Watching and waiting became important spiritual disciplines," she said. The land taught them to be humble before its power.

Another presenter, Tim Waltonen, looked at works by novelist Don DeLillo, who writes mostly of an urban context, particularly New York City. DeLillo, said Waltonen, shows the city as a place for surreal revelations, where seemingly ugly events illuminate God's pathos, or suffering with humanity.

While we tend to think of beautiful places—a snow-covered mountain, a sandy beach, a lush valley, a verdant forest—as most conducive for drawing closer to God, Belden C. Lane, in his book *The Solace of Fierce Landscapes* (Oxford, 1999), argues for a different view. A strong Christian tradition points believers to harsh landscapes, such as deserts or wilderness, to experience God's presence more deeply.

"Much of what we call 'spirituality' today," writes Lane, "is overly sanitized and sterile, far removed from the anguish of pain, the anchoredness of place." People who want to be spiritual tend to ignore or try to escape their physical surroundings, when that is exactly where God may be best revealed to them.

Much of prayer and art is paying attention to the particulars of our lives. We do that through silence, through words, music, sculpture, painting, dance or however God may lead us. But let us pay heed to the places where we live or have lived and find God's mysterious presence there.

films

Pay It Forward (PG-13) preaches a good message about helping others, but its blatant manipulation of our emotions detracts from it having a realistic feel, diminishing the power of the film. Compare this treatment with Jesus' parables, which are not so straightforward and challenge us to engage them.

Best in Show (PG-13) is a hilarious "mockumentary" about dog shows. It pokes fun at all classes of dog owners while treating the dogs with respect. It's not for everyone's tastes.

books

A growing number of books are being written on the arts from a Christian or theological perspective. Two recent works are *Theology and the Arts: Encountering God Through Music, Art and Rhetoric* by Richard Viladesau (Paulist Press, 2000, $17.95) and *Beholding the Glory: Incarnation Through the Arts*, edited by Jeremy Begbie (Baker Books, 2000, $13.99).

Theology and the Arts explores the theme of beauty as a means of divine revelation. This is actually an old theme; church fathers, such as Plontinus, developed a theology of beauty. Viladesau sees "artistic beauty as a means of the mind's 'ascent' to God." He quotes *Doctor Zhivago*, Boris Pasternak's masterpiece: "Beauty is delight in form, and form is the key to organic life, since no living thing can exist without it, so that every work of art, including tragedy, expresses the joy of existence." Viladesau goes on to use music as an example of "the intrinsic relationship of God with beauty." While we think of revelation coming only in words, music can put us in touch with a longing for the divine. The author writes, "Bach's music—like all great religious music—performs a kind of 'apologetic' function by evoking in the hearer a belief in the beautiful, a belief in life, and by raising thereby the question of the grounds of such belief." Viladesau addresses the academic and pastoral realms, and his language gets thick at times. Still, he provides much to chew on for the general reader. He also includes web sites to find illustrations and a discography of music.

Beholding the Glory focuses on the incarnation as a way to approach God's revelation through the arts. In eight chapters, eight artists and writers explore this theme in their areas of expertise: the arts in general, literature, poetry, dance, icons, sculpture, popular music and music. The different perspectives bring a strength and a weakness. They express a variety and richness in thought, but the book lacks coherence. The writing is uneven, and parts of the book are repetitious. Nevertheless, it is filled with helpful insights. For example, Malcolm Guite writes, "A great deal of our best literature is lit from within by the memory of the gospel and in its turn sheds light on that gospel." Andrew Rumsey writes, "The incarnation *must* be realised before it is idealised, and we have missed the point if we cage it away from its natural habitat as the main exhibit in the theological zoo."

Theology has tended to ignore the arts. These two books help remedy that.

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Everett J. Thomas

Glorify God, grow in faith, become agents of healing and hope

The Mennonite *seeks to serve the U.S context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world.*

These words are printed in the masthead (page 3) of *The Mennonite* each week. It is our mission statement. This declaration is the touchstone against which our efforts will be measured. It provides inspiration for the work and criteria for the content of each page.

This statement anticipates three results, with the core purpose to help readers. In other words, our first responsibility is to those who read the magazine. When we succeed, then we strengthen the "U.S. context" of the transformed Mennonite Church in this country.

How can articles and photographs help readers glorify God? How can poems and letters help members grow in faith? How can editorials and cartoons turn subscribers into agents of healing and hope? We welcome your suggestions. I also have some ideas.

To glorify God is to put God at the center of the universe. In our solar system the planets orbit the sun; in our faith system our lives orbit the great Creator. Although God does not need our help, God does want us to orient our lives in such a way that we add to God's glory. We bless God. We magnify God. In so doing, we expand God's presence in this world. It is my hope that these pages will help readers expand God's presence in our world.

Our highest and holiest calling is to serve the church, as the mission statement declares.

To grow in faith is to spend a lifetime living with and yielding to the mystery of Christ's life, death and resurrection. This growth in faith is both personal and corporate. As individuals, we gradually develop a holy indifference to the ways of the world. As a church that is in the world but not of it, we engage with worldly matters but, we hope, become less and less like the world. I hope these pages help you and your congregation grow in such a faith.

To become agents of healing and hope is to carry what many Christians mean by salvation. God does expect that we will, as individuals and as a church, bring God's saving and amazing grace to the world in which we live. As the full moon reflects sunlight onto the night side of the earth, so may these pages help shine God's healing and hope into the darkness of the world around us.

All this work is done in the U.S context of the integrating Mennonite Church. That means we address issues, carry stories and suggest responses that are directly relevant to life in the United States and Puerto Rico.

This magazine's beginning was as a U.S. counterpart to the *Canadian Mennonite.* Until 1998, each denomination published a periodical that served a binational constituency. Creating national-context magazines broke with tradition in both the old Mennonite Church and the General Conference Mennonite Church. Indeed, the creation of these two national magazines in 1997 anticipated the decision in 1999 to create separate country structures for Canada and the United States.

It is in a national context, then, that this magazine is expected to center its news reporting, feature writing and editorial perspective. One way the magazine's staff does these things is by framing discussions about the times in which we live. Doing so allows the church to debate the national and cultural issues that are the waters in which we all swim.

However, our highest and holiest calling is to serve the church, as the mission statement declares. Over the past six months, many well-wishers have reminded me of the heavy leadership responsibilities vested in the role of editor. I accept that mantle and believe what my sisters and brothers have told me: that the confusion and dissension in our church today needs leadership that is winsome and wise. I solicit your prayers that God would grant me the gifts and grace for such leadership.

This 3-year-old magazine is off to a solid start. It benefits from a hard-working staff in Newton, Kan., and Scottdale, Pa. I have come to see that each person who works on this magazine loves the church and intends to make the integrating Mennonite Church stronger through these pages. May God's Spirit fall afresh on each word we write, and may these efforts bless us all on the journey of transformation to become the new Mennonite Church USA.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

November 21, 2000

a Bible full of holes

page 6

8 Listening to the voiceless
12 For violent Colombia, 'change is possible'
14 Students tackle hard mission questions
24 Giving thanks after hard times

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Steps to communication and unity

One of the concerns that I have had for a long time is Readers Say. I find that it often leaves me quite depressed, and it must also be that way to the editor sometimes. I think that there needs to be such a page, but I wish it could become more constructive rather than have divisive results. I have wondered what application of Matthew 18:15-17 could help to make Readers Say more constructive. Here is an idea in rough form:

Step 1—If a member of the church writes something in *The Mennonite* that I think is wrong, I contact that person (phone, letter, email) and discuss the matter between the two of us to make sure I understand what that person is saying. If the member agrees to discuss the matter with me, I have gained that person's respect even though we continue to have differing opinions.

Step 2—If I feel that my concern is legitimate, share it in writing with one or two others in order to get their prayerful consideration on the matter. Ask them for their counsel about sending a letter to Readers Say.

Step 3—Send the letter to *The Mennonite* for Readers Say in order that the church may become aware of the disagreement and hear another viewpoint on the subject of my concern.

My goal for Readers Say is that it might stimulate communication based on Christian love and that it will help build and unify the Church rather than divide it.—*Ivan Kauffmann, Goshen, Ind.*

Joyful anticipation

Thanks to you, Rich Preheim, for your excellent editorial in the Oct. 24 issue ("Celebration and Commitment"). My hopes for Mennonite Church USA are also to get beyond arguing over homosexuality and begin working together at the mission God is calling us to. No, the membership guidelines aren't perfect, but I'm rejoicing with you that (except for the vote at the Nashville convention next summer) this issue is settled, and I'm praying that we affirm the guidelines overwhelmingly and move into the new church together with joy, unity and anticipation of what God will do through us. *—Kevin Goertzen, Goessel, Kan.*

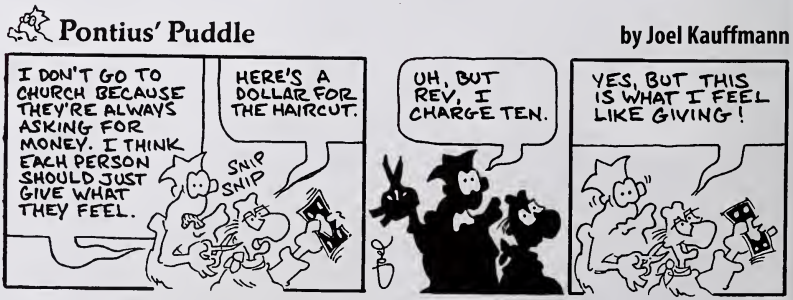
Where is the difficulty?

Reta H. Finger's article on the difficult text of 1 Timothy 2 ("Saved Through Childbearing: The Pauline Logic of 1 Timothy 2:8-15," Oct. 17) made me ask myself, "What is so difficult about this text?" It is pretty straightforward: Women are not to have authority over men in the church. Paul's reason is based on creation and the train of thought seems to be, "As Adam, so men; as Eve, so women." This is hardly difficult to understand, and if we throw it out, we find that we have thrown out, "As Christ, so all mankind" with it.

Now where is the difficulty? It is difficult because many in our society do not like the text. So we dig up problems with it: Women then were not educated like they are now; Genesis 2 is inconsistent with Genesis 1; Paul's use of the Old Testament is different from ours today; we don't obey other verses, so why should we obey these; etc. The spectacle of a professor of a Brethren in Christ college teaching our young people why they don't have to believe this passage of Scripture is not very edifying.—*Monty Ledford, Aberdeen, Idaho*

Why Mennonites should not vote

John D. Roth's "The Rites and Rights of Voting" (Oct. 17) reminded me again how much I struggle each time I am faced with the question of whether to vote. In addition to my Menno-



Pontius' Puddle

by Joel Kauffmann

I DON'T GO TO CHURCH BECAUSE THEY'RE ALWAYS ASKING FOR MONEY. I THINK EACH PERSON SHOULD JUST GIVE WHAT THEY FEEL.
HERE'S A DOLLAR FOR THE HAIRCUT.
SNIP SNIP
UH, BUT REV, I CHARGE TEN.
YES, BUT THIS IS WHAT I FEEL LIKE GIVING!

theMennonite

Vol. 3, No. 44, November 21, 2000

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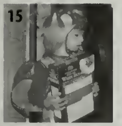
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readers say

nite pacifist and Christian convictions against voting, which Roth outlined well, I have chosen not to vote for the past 10 years because I am convinced our North American system of elections is wasteful and unjust. When candidates spend millions of dollars, donated by wealthy individuals and corporations, to convince me they are the preferred choice, it makes me sad and angry. In a nation where people are starving and in a world struggling to survive drought and war, I find it difficult to support anyone who spends money to gain popularity. And three or four years later, we do it all again. Something is wrong with the system.

Two things that would strengthen my resolve not to participate in elections would be to talk to others in my congregation about my deliberate decision not to vote and also to write a letter to the appropriate government office so they know my silence is a protest rather than ambivalence.—*Miriam Frey, Waterloo, Ont.*

I want to commend you for publishing Roth's article. Early in my 53 years of ministry, I decided against voting but have from time to time registered my counsel and opinion to the various forms of government. The author's four points are, in my estimation, worthy of serious thought.—*Gerald Studer, Lansdale, Pa.*

The answer

Wilma Loganbill's letter of Oct. 2 hit the nail squarely on the head. Crime has been around since the beginning of time, and all solutions have failed, save one, and she put it in four words: Prevention is the answer. I know you cannot unring a bell. Once the bell is rung, there is a place for restorative/transformative justice. But until a bell is rung, i.e., until a crime is committed, prevention is the answer.
—*Robert J. Zani, Tennessee Colony, Texas*

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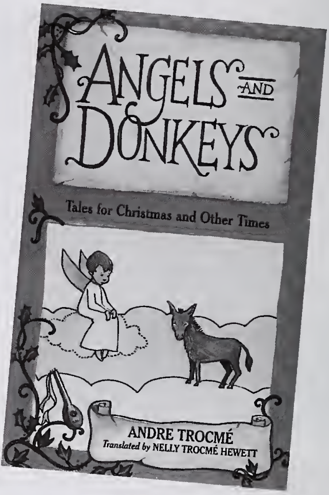
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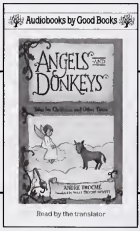
— Peter J. Dyck in *Provident Bookfinder*



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You? 50?

by Glenn Lehman

Over your shoulder, fifty cows
on fifty mountainsides
slowly chew cuds, grinding grass down to a second stomach—
food for multitudes, leftovers for Cumberland market routes
and ice cream the trip home.

Fifty eggs candled in the cellar,
cracked in a wire basket,
fifty dreams by day, fifty stars by night,
fifty Pennsylvania German words sliding down
gullies to the Potomac,
lost to tongue, to ear, to America.

A future born here one cool, hunched dusk,
hungry to pounce,
pining and panting for midnight neon,
for coastal city zip codes.

Fifty topsy years spun fast, counted each autumn,
flipped like so many pages in a diary:
in mother's eyes but forgot by December,
still in father's smile when the sugar maple camp steamed.

Ahead, fifty mountains more, all the same soil and stone
ground even lower from so many ice ages,
so much shifting, scraping and seismic geology
flooding coal mines, exposing bituminous mineral
where only now flowers offer a bloom.

Ahead, footsteps will plod gently, lightly
on these wise-crack mountains
as they settle lower, closer to creation.

You, sometimes using a hill for a pillow,
sometimes warmed by the coal below,
sometimes lit by sight lines to heaven,
will stop talking sometimes and listen to the cows
and the cosmic clock
ruminate and tick across our lovely valley.

Glenn Lehman lives in Leola, Pa.

Isaiah 53

by Jean Janzen

Van Gogh stopped painting
the black Bible.

Instead he took
black apart, color

by color, and let
its strands pulse

and moan in chairs
and stars, in trees

and ears of wheat.
Grief acquainted

with blue. Rejection
in sulphurous green.

He did it for us
so we could look

if we dared, taste
the ache, let it sizzle

under our own skin.
So we could be healed.

Jean Janzen is a Mennonite poet in Fresno, Calif. Her latest book of poems is Tasting the Dust *(Good Books, 2000).*

Rohn Engh

A Bible full of holes

Christians have often ignored the Bible's teaching about wealth and poverty.

by Jim Wallis

My moment of real awakening on the question of poor people came in theological seminary. Several of my fellow students and I made a study of every mention of the poor in the Bible. We found several thousand verses on the subject. In the Hebrew Scriptures, it was the second most prominent theme, idolatry being the first, and the two were often related. In the New Testament, one out of every 16 verses had to do with wealth and poverty. In the first three Gospels the subject is in one out of every 10 verses; in the Gospel of Luke, it is in one out of seven verses. We were utterly amazed. Then we became even more amazed as we discussed our findings and realized that none of us had ever heard a sermon in any of our churches on the danger of riches and God's concern for the poor. Yet the Scriptures were filled with this theme from beginning to end. Why the silence?

One of my seminary colleagues had taken a pair of scissors to an old Bible and proceeded to cut out every single reference to riches or the poor. It took him a long time. By the time he was finished the Prophets were decimated, the Psalms destroyed, the Gospels ripped to shreds and the Epistles turned to tattered rags. The Bible was full of holes.

That seminary experience gave me one of my most tried and true sermon illustrations. One of my seminary colleagues had taken a pair of scissors to an old Bible and proceeded to cut out every single reference to riches or the poor. It took him a long time. By the time he was finished the Prophets were decimated, the Psalms destroyed, the Gospels ripped to shreds and the Epistles turned to tattered rags. The Bible was full of holes. He still has that old torn-up Bible; he's kept it all these years. I used to take it out with me to preach. I'd hold it high above church congregations and say, "Brothers and sisters, this is our American Bible. It's full of holes."

The danger of riches: The clarity of the Bible on the subject of wealth and poverty seldom comes up in America. You can imagine my surprise when I opened up *The Washington Post* one day and found an op-ed piece titled, "Woe to You Who Are Rich." Fascinated, I quickly read the opening paragraph, which began: "Assume that you had never read the New Testament and were given a quiz with the following question: 'During his ministry, Christ spoke out most often about (a) the evils of homosexuality, (b) the merits of democracy, (c) family-friendly tax cuts or (d) the danger of riches.' It turns out that Christ said nothing about the first three and a lot about the last one. But you'd never know it based on the rhetoric of many modern-day Christians—particularly politically active ones."

The article was by Peter Wehner, the policy director of Empower America, a conservative Republican organization. Wehner pointed out that the Bible is clear on the issues of wealth and poverty. The article went on to quote large portions of Scripture to show how spiritually dangerous wealth is, according to Jesus and all the biblical writers, and how insistent the Scriptures are in demanding compassion and justice for the poor and oppressed. The clear implication was that America's affluence puts the nation in great spiritual danger, and our lack of concern for the poor is a sign of our moral failing.

U.S. Congressman Tony Hall has counted more than 2,500 biblical verses of direct teaching on the subjects of hunger and poverty, a fact that he shared with us at a "preach-in" for the poor that Call to Renewal (a national federation of more than 40 churches and faith-based organizations working together to overcome poverty) held in the U.S. Capitol in the wake of the welfare cuts. Hall, a Democrat from Ohio, had just returned from Sudan and was exhausted from his 41-hour journey but nonetheless wanted to tell us what he had seen. The congressman spoke quietly and movingly about his time in the Sudan, where he saw hundreds of women and children starving to death. This soft-spoken Christian layman apologized for not being a great preacher like those gathered that day; he went on to say,

Somehow, the well-being of the poor must be seen to be key to a society's health and well-being. Connecting with one another must be seen as essential for the sake of our own souls. It must never be a matter of guilt, because guilt is a motivation with little staying power. It must become a matter of our mutual well-being and even our healing.

"When I see a situation like that, there are a couple of Scriptures that really mean something to me."

He reached inside his suit-coat pocket, pulled out a small Bible and quietly read from Proverbs 14:31: "He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God." Hall went on: "We do something for God by being with the poor, preaching for the poor, legislating for the poor. The most important thing I do in Congress is to do the best I can for poor people." I had never heard so much powerful preaching in a single day before, but the most striking moment of the preach-in came when this sorrowful and tired congressman reported that people were dying needlessly because we didn't care, and reminded us that God does.

Argument against poverty: In the current climate, we may well need to make that kind of religious or spiritual argument against poverty. The self-interest argument alone may not be enough. For years, liberals argued that an investment in the poor is in our own self-interest and good for the economy, at least in the long run. But the booming economy hardly needs those at the bottom anymore. And if we just build more prisons, privatize them and make them profitable by turning the inmate population into a virtual slave-labor force to service the bottom rungs of the economy (to clean our schools and offices at night), we may finally have found a solution for what to do with poor people. It may sound chilling, but that's close to what's happening now. With prison construction and the security industry two of our fastest-growing economic sectors, the affluent will be well buffered against any contact with poor people, and the current political ethic will make it easier and easier to ignore them.

Clearly we need a theology of solidarity that will bring us together. Somehow, the well-being of the poor must be seen to be key to a society's health and well-being. Connecting with one another must be seen as essential for the sake of our own souls. It must never be a matter of guilt, because guilt is a motivation with little staying power. It must become a matter of our mutual well-being and even our healing. For the poorest among us, the issues are those of survival. For the middle, it's the fear, alienation and loss of human values in a market-driven culture. Many Americans today fear economic failure and at the same time find economic success increasingly meaningless. As for our society, we see a culture about to give up on finding solutions to any of these problems.

Jim Wallis is editor-in-chief of Sojourners *and author of* Faith Works *(Random House, 2000), from which this article is adapted.*

CLEO Photography

Listening to the voiceless

All of us tend to withhold respect, concern and even justice from those lower on the ladder than ourselves. When we do this, we render these people voiceless.

by Jan Johnson

The sleekly dressed businessman bolted across the street against the traffic signal. He barely made it, accidentally shoving my friend Delsinore and me as we stood at the curb. He looked at me and said, "I'm sorry—excuse me." He said nothing to Delsinore, probably because she's a bag lady.

After a minute, I tapped the man on the shoulder, smiled and said, "You bumped her, too. Please apologize to her."

Eyebrows went up around me as the man mumbled an apology. I was thrilled to have requested a small token of courtesy for Dels, but I also winced at the snickers of those around me and imagined their thoughts: What's this white Lady Bountiful doing with a black woman pushing a shopping cart?

Knowing Delsinore reinforces what I already know. Every society has its hierarchy of worthiness, and people like Delsinore are among the lowest on the ladder. Seeing how people treat her reminds me of how all of us tend to withhold respect, concern and even justice from those lower on the ladder than ourselves. When we do this, we render these people voiceless.

The silence of voiceless people grows out of their power-down positions in society. We don't take them seriously because they don't have the status, money, age or know-how to command our respect. God regards them differently.

The silence of voiceless people grows out of their power-down positions in society: residents of lower-class neighborhoods, the poorly paid, the handicapped, the aging, the less intelligent, unskilled laborers, even children when they're routinely talked down to. We don't take them seriously because they don't have the status, money, age or know-how to command our respect. God regards them differently.

Guardian of the needy: Many of those who are voiceless match the biblical categories of the needy: the widow, the fatherless and the alien (or "sojourner" or "stranger"). God didn't speak of giving them equality and fair treatment but instead recognized the human tendency to treat them unequally and unfairly and declared himself their guardian: " 'Because the poor are despoiled, because the needy groan, I will now rise up,' says the Lord; 'I will place them in the safety for which they long' " (Psalm 12:5).

God mounted attacks against those who cheated the needy and commissioned Israel to become modern-day public defenders, so to speak, defending the causes of the needy and pleading their cases (Proverbs 23:10-11; Psalm 82:3; Isaiah 1:17).

Some of us respond by sponsoring children overseas and donating clothes to downtown street missions. Participating in these worthwhile efforts satisfies our uneasiness until we walk past a homeless family living in their car, or we get frustrated trying to buy gum from someone who can't speak our language, or we watch the house or car next door become shabby when a father walks out on a family. We battle within ourselves: Sure we need more homeless shelters, but not on my street; let people immigrate, only don't let their limited English slow me down as I run errands; it's a shame couples break up, but it makes the neighborhood look bad when weeds take over their yard. Suddenly the faces of the voiceless look more familiar. We find that giving away money and old clothing is much easier than becoming a guardian, rescuer and defender of people who may cramp our style.

So we experiment. We may make phone calls to find shelters for families and direct that family in the car to a shelter. We may expect to have to work to understand the broken English of the woman selling us gum. We may offer to mow the lawn for the family whose father just left.

Respect and solidarity: Part of the appeal of Jesus in the Gospels is the way he counted the people his culture called losers as better than himself. Christ took women and children seriously in an age when they were unimportant. He singled out the sick, the demon-possessed and the poor in spirit and treated them with respect. He never talked down to such people.

My relationship with Delsinore is teaching me that kind of respect. When I first met her, I

HOMELESS
AND
HUNGRY, MY
LORD Jesus Loves You

James Carroll

To look into someone's eyes and ask them what they need instead of foisting our own blessings on them places the voiceless in the power-up position for once. They talk and we listen.

offered to take her to a shelter, but she told me she liked the streets better. I gave her bags of oranges whenever I saw her, but later I found out she gave them away because her teeth were too loose to eat them.

In many conversations with God, I offered these frustrations: I want to be effective; I want her to appreciate my help; I question how deserving she is. I'm finally realizing that my so-called charity isn't about her but about my need to feel like a good Christian. One day, as we sat on a bench at a bus stop together, I asked her, "What is the most helpful thing I could do for you?"

"Sit here and talk to me," she said. "Nobody talks to me. People look right through me."

Her words were like a whack on the head. Of course. Christ sat and dined and talked as well as operating his own divine medical clinic and food pantry (feeding 5,000 at a time). He respected people and asked them questions. To look into someone's eyes and ask them what they need instead of foisting our own blessings on them places the voiceless in the power-up position for once. They talk and we listen.

Christ also stayed out of that pious power-up position by identifying closely with voiceless people: "Just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family [the hungry, the thirsty, the sick and the imprisoned], you did to me" (Matthew 25:40). He experienced a solidarity with the voiceless so that their hunger became his hunger, and their imprisonment became his imprisonment.

Giving a voice to the voiceless isn't always a tidy little command easily obeyed. More often it's messy and open-ended. We may cry over injustice one day and gloss over it the next. God doesn't ask us to reform the world but to show respect and concern to each person put in our path, going the extra mile with those our society overlooks. It's a struggle, but in the best moments we see Christ's face on the faces of voiceless people, and we offer him respect and concern. In moments when we don't, we express our regret to a God who never renders us voiceless, and we find comfort there.

Jan Johnson, Simi, Calif., is the author of Growing Compassionate Kids *and* Living a Purpose-Full Life.

difficult texts of the Bible

Many of the Jews are now enemies of the Good News. … But someday they, too, will share in God's mercy.—Romans 11:28,32 NLT

There's a wideness in God's mercy

Sixth in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by Mitchell Brown

What about the Jews? This is the question Paul tries to answer in Romans 11. It is a problem of particular importance to Paul, since "I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin" (Romans 11:1b). This question speaks urgently to me, as I also am a Jew who finds himself in the Mennonite church.

What should happen to the faithful Jews who have not heeded the good news of Jesus Christ? Paul is clear that these unhearing Jews are not lost, indeed they are "elect" (11:28). But how do we as Christians deal with this election? After all, it has been nearly 2,000 years, and not much has changed; the Jews go on in stubborn disbelief to the gospel of Jesus Christ. And we must be honest: This is not going to change. There are going to be Jews and Christians right up until the end time. Using Paul's difficult discussion in Romans 11, I want to argue that this is how it should be.

God can have both Christians and Jews even if we cannot understand how. The mistake that we make and that Paul is preaching against in Romans 11 is our human tendency to limit God's mercy by our standards of rationality.

The problem of the Jews strikes me most deeply when I think of Jewish teachers I have encountered. My journey to Christianity began when I was introduced to the writings of the Orthodox Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik. I had the further good fortune to be able to sit in on some classes with him. Through the teachings of Soloveitchik I came to know God for the first time in my life and learned what it meant to be part of a people of God. For me this faith came to fruition in the Christian—specifically the Mennonite—church. But as I look back on Rabbi Soloveitchik I cannot but believe that he is exactly where he should be. He is as close to a holy man as I have yet seen. He is most certainly "saved." Yet he is not a Christian.

How can this situation be reconciled? What are we to do with good and faithful Jews like Rabbi Soloveitchik? Paul warns us that this is a mystery (11:25), and it is only under the idea of such a mystery that we can begin to make sense of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. As Christians we find ourselves in a situation of paradox. We, like Paul, are compelled by our faith to spread the gospel. Paul went to the ends of the earth to accomplish just this. Yet at the same time that we are being evangelistic we find that the original people of God are stubborn in their disbelief of this same life-saving gospel. And I would go further and say that somehow these Jews are already saved.

It is precisely in the midst of such a paradox that we find our answer. This is a paradox because we rely on our limited human reason. For us something is either true or false, yes or no; 2 + 2 must equal 4. Human reason is at work. But this is not how God works. God, who should have destroyed Israel countless times, tells us: "I will not execute my fierce anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and no mortal, the Holy One in your midst" (Hosea 11:9). Our human rationality demands a yes or no, but God's mind can encompass both. God can have both Christians and Jews even if we cannot understand how. The mistake that we make and that Paul is preaching against in Romans 11 is our human tendency to limit God's mercy by our standards of rationality.

We cannot begin to understand God. A couple of scientific examples may prove helpful. Modern physics teaches us that light appears both as a wave and as a particle. Somehow it is both. I can't understand this any more than I can understand the existence of both Jews and Christians as God's people. But just as light is both particle and wave, so are God's people both Jewish and Christian. Why this is so is summed up in a striking image by the theologian Eugen Rosenstock-Huessey in *Judaism Despite Christianity*: "The true Christians can preach the gospel among the Gentiles. They are the rays sent out from this central fire [Judaism], which actually transform the world. As coals in the heart of fire, the Jews are prisoners of God."

We have trouble understanding Paul sometimes because he does not fit into our categories of rationality. Paul was not a systematic theologian first but a pragmatist. He had a job to do. He had to spread the gospel, and whatever he did was to this end. His job was not to make sense of the gospel (indeed it doesn't make sense, 1 Corinthians 1:23) but to get word of God's mercy out to the Gentiles. Paul's theology is thus pragmatic to the core, and when he speaks harshly about the Jews, as he does in Galatians, he does so because some Jewish Christians had tried to block his mission to the Gentiles.

Things have turned around by the time of Romans. Now it is the place of Jews that is being questioned, and again the pragmatic Paul writes with a purpose, not of consistency but of spreading the word of God: The Jews are important to God's plan and their place must be protected. The pragmatic argument here, as before, is guided by a pastoral purpose, mercy: "For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all" (11:32). God's mercy is above all what Paul cares about, and he will stop at nothing to get word of that mercy out, to the Gentiles when they are being cut out and finally even to the Jews, though they have rejected Christ. Just as God's mercy overcame God's rationality in Hosea, so does the need to preach this mercy overcome Paul's consistency throughout his letters.

This bothers us. We want more from Paul. We want a consistent, rational theology. But that is not what God gives us, and that's not what Paul gives us. God gives us an abundant love that breaks all that would contain it. No, I don't understand how there can be both Jews and Christians in God's plan. It's a mystery. But I do know that one of the greatest dangers we religious folk face is limiting God's love by our human need of coherence. We must be reminded that, in the words of the hymn, "the love of God is broader than the measures of the mind" (*Hymnal: A Worship Book* #145).

Paul's task in Romans 9–11 is to warn Gentile Christians about lording it over the Jews. The Jews are still God's people. Over the centuries, Christians have forgotten this. And in forgetting it they have allowed the human need for order and sense to limit the living and abundant love that is God's way in the world. The final protection against such human presumption is to remember that finally God is a mystery. In Romans, Paul teaches us how to live in the face of such mystery. Difficult Scriptures of all sorts keep the mystery of God alive in the church. We must face the mystery: There will be Jews and Christians, particles and waves, right up until the end time. Only then will all be made clear. Or as Paul puts it: "When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subjected to the one who put all things in subjection under him, so that God may be all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28).

We are not there yet.

Mitchell Brown is pastor at Evanston (Ill.) Mennonite Church.

God's mercy is above all what Paul cares about, and he will stop at nothing to get word of that mercy out, to the Gentiles when they are being cut out and finally even to the Jews, though they have rejected Christ.

RNS photo of detail of a painting by Morris Katz

For violent Colombia, 'change is possible'

Mission worker relies on Christ's hope, sense of humor

The two words repeated most often in Bonnie Klassen's journal over the past three years, she says, are, "How long?"

Since 1997, Klassen has lived in Bogotá, Colombia, as a worker with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions . She is the assistant to Ricardo Esquivia, director of JustaPaz, the Mennonite Church of Colombia's peace and justice agency.

Living in one of the most violent societies in the world, working daily with seemingly hopeless situations, knowing that friends and acquaintances are under death threats, has taught Klassen patience, she says. But it doesn't always come easily. Nonetheless, she persists in "resurrection hope."

"I believe in what goes beyond human effort," says Klassen. "I believe in resurrection. God can act, bring life, transform a situation. Christ's resurrection opened up all the doors to make everything new.

"One of the principal roles of the church is to bring hope. People who are desperate all over the world believe violence is the only solution. The church needs to keep people from reaching that point."

Klassen, who is from Kitchener, Ont., says her context has prompted her to develop "a Colombian sense of humor." About a month after she moved into a new apartment, a bomb went off nearby, shaking everything in the area.

"I had just taken my sink apart to clean it out so the drain would work and had put it back together," Klassen says. "A piece fell out of the ceiling right into my newly cleaned drain. It could have fallen anywhere in the whole apartment, but it had to fall there. I laughed about it, and knew I now had a Colombian sense of humor."

Although Klassen has friends under death threats—some have lived that way for years—she does not feel any particular danger herself. "There is still a lot of respect for North Americans in Colombia," she says. "And I live in the city, not the country, where most of the random killings and kidnappings happen.

"You just learn how to live with it. We wear hats—it's amazing how many people don't recognize you when you're wearing a hat. You don't use a phone to plan where you're going to meet" because the phone could be tapped.

Klassen's JustaPaz work includes an initiative called Sanctuaries for Peace, which involves individual congregations willing to take a public stand for peace and justice.

"This is an idea that people in the Mennonite Church in Colombia have been talking about for years," Klassen says, "but it's only since 1998 that JustaPaz has been working at it in a more organized way, supplying resources to congregations to help them think through some of the issues."

Klassen

Sanctuaries for Peace began in earnest at about the same time the Colombian government started negotiating with the FARC, Colombia's largest leftist group, and then with the second largest group, the ELN.

"Colombian society is going through a process of polarization," Klassen says. "Because there is [government] contact with the FARC and the ELN, the paramilitaries and other armed groups have to show their strength [by killing and kidnapping], to make sure they aren't forgotten. The process is shaky, so everyone knows if it breaks down, it will be important whose side you are on.

"The whole idea of Sanctuaries for Peace is to keep the church in a centered position but not a neutral one—not aligned with any one side but taking a position. It can be very strong or very vulnerable."

Through Sanctuaries for Peace, a variety of congregations—most of the Colombia Mennonite churches as well as other Protestant churches—across the country are working through what it means to "take a position in the midst of armed and social conflict, including economic and family violence, of being for negotiation, not for violence or taking up arms," Klassen says.

Each congregation goes through a discernment process, with members asking them-

Mission boards, MCC support Colombia

At their meeting last month in Excelsior Springs, Mo., the mission agencies of the General Conference Mennonite Church, Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church Canada approved sending a joint letter of support to the Mennonite Church of Colombia.

"We are deeply moved and support your persistent and courageous efforts to proclaim God's peace in the midst of social injustice and war in your country," said the letter, signed by executives and board chairs of the Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions and the Ministries Commission of Mennonite Church Canada.

Meanwhile, the Mennonite Central Committee U.S. executive committee at its October meeting approved a resolution against U.S. policy toward Colombia, including $1.3 billion in military assistance. The resolution was sent to the White House.

—GCMC, MBM and MCC news services

selves if they are willing to commit to the vision and if they have the resources to offer, such as training opportunities or congregational members with particular gifts or skills.

Both the Evangelical Council of Churches in Colombia—which includes about 80 percent of the non-Catholic congregations in the country—and the Mennonite Church of Colombia have adopted Sanctuaries for Peace. So far only a handful of congregations are involved, but the number continues to grow.

"The churches in Colombia in general view anyone working for peace, for social or economic justice or social transformation, as a member of the left," Klassen says. "That's why it has been a struggle to get churches involved in this. We try to work at it from a biblical foundation instead of a leftist ideology or a political position. After all, this was in the Bible first.

"In the last two years, the level of violence, the intensity of the armed conflict, the level of unemployment and social crisis, such as hospitals closing, have pushed the church into responding. They are seeing their pastors killed or kidnapped, their members massacred. In many places you can't leave your church building without asking permission from one armed group, and then a few kilometers down the road you have to ask permission of another group to keep going that way."

One thing Klassen hopes for as part of Sanctuaries for Peace is partnerships of Colombian congregations with North American ones. This is happening with eastern U.S. congregations of the United Church of Christ. UCC's Connecticut conference has been supporting JustaPaz for the past two years.

Klassen is now on North America assignment before returning in January 2001 for another three-year term. While in the United States and Canada, she will be looking for possible Mennonite partners for Sanctuaries for Peace. "The work [of Sanctuaries for Peace] is not dangerous, but it's demanding," she says. "North American church members can offer a lot of support … with their prayers, lobbying their government officials, educating themselves and others.

"I would like people to gain a different image of Colombia from what the North American media portrays, that the problem in Colombia is so simple that U.S. military aid will solve it, that Colombia is nothing but violence and drug lords. Even if the situation is complex and it will be hard to change, still change is possible."—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM news services*

People who are desperate all over the world believe violence is the only solution. The church needs to keep people from reaching that point.

—*Bonnie Klassen*

Colombian Mennonite leader challenges churches

WASHINGTON – When Colombian Mennonite leader Ricardo Esquivia visited U.S. Christians last month, he didn't mince words. "Through your tax dollars, you are supporting war," he told a meeting at a Washington United Church of Christ church.

In anticipation of U.S. plans to inject $1.3 billion into Colombia, most of which is military aid targeted to fighting the drug war, guerrillas are recruiting aggressively and positioning themselves while they can, Esquivia said. Meanwhile, human rights conditions in the aid package are making the military shift even more of their "dirty work" to paramilitaries, who have stepped up attacks on civilians, particularly on peace and human rights workers.

"When the U.S. aid package comes to Colombia, the war will increase," explained Esquivia, director of Justapaz, the Colombian Mennonite peace and justice organization. "When you increase the war, you increase the number of displaced people. These displaced people then turn to one of the few economic options available—growing coca. Then the amount of cocaine entering the United States increases"

He said nearly 50,000 people have fled their homes during the last few months. These newly displaced Colombians now join the nearly 2 million Colombians already uprooted, many lacking even basic necessities. The displaced people—who do not qualify for international refugee assistance because they are still within their own country—flee to city slums, squatter communities or relatives' homes. Others find shelter in gymnasiums or other public buildings.

Esquivia said Colombian churches can play an important role in breaking the cycle of violence. They can draw on and distribute resources, while church buildings serve as shelters and pastors minister to spiritual needs. Churches also have a built-in network and national structure that connects groups across the country.

"The church is one of the few groups in Colombia that crosses all sectors of society," Esquivia said.

But if Colombian churches are to continue their work for peace, they will need support from North American churches. Esquivia called for help in changing the common perception that all Colombians are drug traffickers.

"It is important that churches from other places help change the message of death and destruction in order to transform the situation in Colombia," he said.—*Rachelle Schlabach for MCC News Service*

It is important that churches from other places change the message of death and destruction.

—*Ricardo Esquivia*

Students tackle hard mission questions

Goshen class' 'passion' produces publication of top 10 list

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College students enrolled in a survey course on missions this past spring didn't just read a textbook—they wrote one of their own. *Hard Questions About Missions: A Top 10 List From 37 College Students,* released last month by Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM), contains reflections written by the students as their final project for their course "Missions: New Millennium."

"I was often moved by the passion in this group for missions," says course instructor James R. Krabill, MBM vice president for mission advocacy and communication. "What the 37 students in this study lack in firsthand field experience, they make up in energy and fresh insight applied to some age-old issues."

The course explored Christian missions from biblical, theological, historical, sociological and popular culture perspectives. The students examined overseas missions as well as North American contexts. Each class session began with prayer for a region of the world.

During the first class session, students worked in small groups to list their questions about missions, generating 144 questions in the first 20 minutes. After condensing that list into 63 questions, 10 were eventually chosen to pursue throughout the semester (see sidebar, left).

The questions ranged from the qualifications for being a missionary to the proper balance of social action and evangelism. Students tackled how to revitalize churches for missions and examined how Christian faith is at odds with North American culture.

To address the 10 questions, students were first assigned to research one of the questions and write several pages of reflections. Students then formed 10 small groups, one for each question, to discuss their reflections. Out of their individual conclusions, each group needed to find common understandings to present to the class in a 15-minute oral summary. Finally, each of the 10 groups wrote a 600-word response to their question.

"The 'Top 10' questions identified here are questions the church must face in order to carry out more faithfully her mission to the world," Krabill wrote in the booklet, which was released as part of MBM's "Mission Insight" occasional paper series. "The student reflections found in these pages will help her to do just that."

In response to the question of social action vs. evangelism, Julie Brandenberger, Geoffrey Christanday and Charletta Erb wrote: "Evangelism without social action de-emphasizes the power the gospel has to transform lives. Social action without evangelism de-emphasizes the inward transformation available through Jesus."

Another question addressed how far away one needs to go to be a missionary. "People can be effective missionaries in any location through sharing their actions and attitudes," wrote Jeanna Baus, Cliona Deegan and Rachel Troyer. "God has planned for us all to be part of the Great Commission."

In addressing the North American context for missions, Heidi Burkhart, Geovanna Ditzler, Eliot Friesen and Ginny Martin wrote: "Materialism, nationalism, pluralism and individualism—all prevalent in our society—are forces that defy the basic principles of the Bible and are at odds with the church."

For Sarah Sales, the class helped her understand that people need to be missionaries "right here in the United States, to our neighbors and co-workers."

"I feel our generation has done a lot of soul searching to own their faith and that we will be prepared to help lead these souls in the right direction," she says. "However, I don't feel much support from the church saying that this type of missions is really missions.

"So often the Mennonite Church defines missions as something you have to leave the country … to do."

The student authors represented a wide array of backgrounds. Of the 37 contributors, seven are international students, several are "missionary kids," and some have never left North America. As a group, they have lived, traveled or studied in 67 countries, not counting participation in Goshen's Study Service Term. About half of the students have expressed interest in doing mission work in the future.

"The students brought a huge spectrum of theological perspectives," Krabill says. "Part of their learning experience was simply finding common language to discuss the issues.

"Part of the impetus for this project was the lack of Anabaptist perspectives in missiology textbooks. As Anabaptists, we have a distinct contribution to make to the body of writing about mission. We think about the theological task of missions differently."—*Bethany Swope of MBM News Service*

10 hard questions

1. Is there a place for short-term missions today? If so, what should it be?
2. What is more important in missions, meeting the physical needs of people (social action) or sharing the good news of Jesus (evangelism)?
3. How does one present the gospel without imposing one's own cultural viewpoints?
4. Is Jesus the only way?
5. How far away does one need to go to be a missionary?
6. In what ways are the Christian faith and following Jesus at odds with North American culture?
7. What about those who have never heard of Jesus?
8. How does one decide where to evangelize, and what methods are most appropriate for carrying out the task?
9. What will it take to revitalize and motivate less active, traditional Mennonite churches for missions?
10. What qualifications are required to be a missionary today, and what kind of training is most helpful in preparation?

—*Hard Questions About Missions*

Conference looks at genetically engineered crops as farmers, theologians, aid workers weigh in

WINNIPEG—Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) waded into the debate raging over genetically engineered crops with a mid-October conference in Winnipeg attended by farmers, theologians, foreign aid workers, biotechnology industry representatives and others.

Biotechnology is a technology that MCC cannot ignore, said William Reimer, who directs MCC's food program. Genetic engineering is a powerful technology with the capacity to profoundly impact the organization's constituents, both in developing countries and in Europe and North America.

MCC is committed to the food security of all people, which essentially means that people everywhere should have enough to eat. MCC also works for peace and justice for all people. It is within the context of this mission that MCC needs to understand and examine the biotechnology issue, said Reimer.

"How much responsibility should the farmer be shouldering?" asked Marg Rempel, who farms southeast of Winnipeg. Biotechnology is an issue the broader public should have grappled with before the genetically modified crops became available commercially. It was only after farmers began growing the modified crops that public concerns arose. Because of the public outcry, the market for some crops vanished, and farmers were left with seed they could no longer plant.

The ethics of growing genetically modified crops aren't clear, said Tony Peters, who farms near Portage La Prairie, Man. Who does one listen to? Industry? Environmentalists? The church? "Are we getting the whole story?" Peters asked.

Dealing with biotechnology is a challenge for much of the developing world as well, said Patricia Kameri-Mbote, a senior researcher with the African Centre for Technology Studies in Nairobi, Kenya.

"There is no inherent goodness or badness to any technology," she said. "It's an issue of maximizing benefits and minimizing risks." Unfortunately, most African countries have not developed the capacity to adequately work with the new technology even as it is being introduced into local farming communities, raising the possibility that these countries could become dumping grounds for environmentally harmful technologies.

The reality is that there is often enough food in a region, but people don't have access to it because of poverty, government policy, global trade policies, war and a variety of other reasons. Growing more food with the help of genetically modified crops will not necessarily solve the problem of hunger.

Nevertheless, said Kameri-Mbote, "BT [biotechnology] is with us and has potential. We shouldn't throw out the baby with the bath water."

Greg Penner, a geneticist with Monsanto, a company heavily invested in the biotechnology business, said people should be careful to separate fact from fiction. He told of an environmentalist who said publicly that when he sat down to a meal he didn't want to be eating DNA, the part of a cell that is manipulated to modify the plant or animal. "The reality is you're eating thousands of kilometers of DNA every time you eat a meal," Penner said.

Penner agreed that there are limits to what companies should do with genetic manipulation, but it is the role of the public, through government, to establish them.

A public ethic on the issue hasn't emerged yet, said Harry Huebner, a professor at Canadian Mennonite University in Winnipeg. But he said one can talk about a Christian ethic and biotechnology within the context of the Christian understanding of life and power. "There is no ethics without community," he said.—*MCC News Service*

Correction: Michael and Virginia Hostetler serve in Nazareth, Israel, with the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions. They were misidentified in the Nov. 7 issue.

Mary E. Klassen

All treats, no tricks

Havela Lehman (left), dressed as a butterfly, and clown Esther Maddimadugu gather donations of food in the halls of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., on Oct. 31 as an alternative celebration to Halloween. Maddimadugu, an AMBS student from India, is also the teacher in the AMBS daycare program. Lehman, daughter of Dawn and Todd Lehman of Dayton, Wash., and other children in the program joined Maddimadugu in collecting 250 items from staff, faculty and students. The donated items were delivered to an Elkhart food pantry.

Live within reason, 'Galloping Gourmet' tells MEDA convention

Graham Kerr signs books during Mennonite Economic Development Associates' annual convention Nov. 2-5 in Vancouver. Kerr, TV's "Galloping Gourmet," was one of the convention's featured speakers.

MEDA News Service

VANCOUVER—Living within reason in a world that promotes conspicuous consumption can be like "going up an escalator that's going down," the former "Galloping Gourmet" of TV fame told attenders at Mennonite Economic Development Associates' (MEDA) annual convention Nov. 2-5 in Vancouver.

"There's a world out there going one way, and sometimes we are required to go the other way," Graham Kerr said in his address, which focused on building a bridge from conspicuous consumption to living within reason.

Kerr told his audience that they can't know if they are enjoying God's abundance unless they have a measure to help them know how much is enough.

"When your measure overflows, that is your abundance," he said, adding that the key to living within reason is "not to exchange your measure for a bigger one. ... Choose a measure that is appropriate to what you need."

At the convention's closing worship service, Mennonite World Conference president Mesach Krisetya called for churches in the North and South to build partnerships that involve more than the traditional flow of money. "If we talk only on the basis of money, then what happens is that we build a new state of dependency," Krisetya said.

He went on to say that missions should not be defined solely as evangelism. A preferable approach, Krisetya said, would be to carry out missions through individual, business and church-church partnerships.

About 450 people attended the convention. During MEDA's annual general meeting, participants were told that during the past year:

- a record $1.2 million had been donated,
- the number of microcredit clients had increased 32 percent,
- the Sarona Global Investment Fund had reached $4 million in investments,
- a modest credit program started 10 years ago in Nicaragua had graduated to become a full-fledged financial services bank,
- the number of MEDA's ASSETS training programs for low- and moderate-income entrepreneurs in North America had grown to eight.

MEDA supporters also approved the appointment of Ron Haarer as the new board chair. He is from Phoenix, where he is a member of Trinity Mennonite Church.—*MEDA News Service*

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MCC photo by Victor Martinez

More than 350 people attended the Oct. 15 dedication ceremony for the new Guatemala City campus of SEMILLA, the Central American Anabaptist seminary.

Guatemala seminary celebrates new campus

GUATEMALA CITY—More than 350 people turned out Oct. 15 for the dedication of the new campus for SEMILLA, the Latin American Anabaptist Seminary in Guatemala City.

SEMILLA was created in 1982 to train pastors and church leaders throughout the region, using a distance-education model. The new campus unites the seminary library and offices, which were at a different location, with guest quarters and classrooms for CASAS, the school's Central American Study and Service program. The new facilities also include a courtyard and cafeteria.

Volunteers from North and Central America donated funds and labor for the project.

"At the same time that volunteers built walls together, they also tore down other types of walls that many times cause division, such as language, culture and prejudices," said SEMILLA administrator Hector Argueta.

Said Arcadio Artoloa, a Nicaraguan who is president of the SEMILLA board: "We give many thanks to God for putting love in the hearts of many people to share in order to build this place. May it be for the formation of men and women prepared to participate in the work of the kingdom of God carried out by our churches in Central America."

The dedication ceremony was followed by a commencement service for 10 graduating students.

The cost of the campus land and buildings was $580,000. SEMILLA is still looking to raise $250,000.

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Third Way Café is produced by Mennonite Media, a department of Mennonite Board of Missions.

Loans generate funds for Benin families

ZANKOUMADON, Benin—As each woman came forward to receive her loan, she brought gifts of corn, peanuts and a rooster for the visitors who had come.

"Today we have offered to you the fruit of the earth," said Deborah Oballe, one of the loan recipients, who told the visitors that since women can't own land in Benin, the loan would be for a small business that would allow her to care for her family.

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•The Sarona Global Investment Fund is a program of Mennonite Economic Development Associates.•

"Your loan will mean that we will no longer have to sell all of our crops to generate money," Oballe said. "We will be able to generate the funds we need to provide for our families through the small business that these loans will allow us to do. In that way, we ourselves will be able to consume the fruit of the earth that we have produced."

The ceremony, in which 20 women in the village of Zankoumadon received loans, came after months of preparation by the workers of the Association of Evangelical Churches for Social Promotion, a partner organization of Mennonite Board of Missions. North American Mennonite businesspeople donated $10,000 for the program, which is administered through a community bank.

Several months ago, 60 women in Zankoumadon wanted to receive loans. A community assessment was conducted and training sessions in literacy and management. In the end, only 20 women remained. Many in the village doubted whether any money would be loaned.

"Many nongovernmental organizations come here to the village telling us that they will grant us loans for small-business activities," says Elisabeth Doko, the community bank president. "The association is the first to make the promise and then to fulfill the promise by training us and actually putting in place the credit."

In Zankoumadon, the 20 recipients, ranging in age from 20 to 65 years, were given loans of $40, bringing the total loaned in the village to $800. Banks will also be established in three other villages where the association works. The total of $10,000 will be distributed through these four banks, which will give loans for agricultural credit.

"By giving loans to women, we believe that we can reach many other people in their households and in the entire village," says Ernest Gnonlonfoun, the association's coordinator. "Women are the principal caregivers of the children in our society. Yet, they have a number of strikes against them in that task. It is often difficult for them to generate much income. The community bank loans help them to do just that—to improve their own health and nutrition as well as that of their children, to help pay school fees and to help their husbands provide for their families' needs."—*MBM News Service*

Menno Simons to receive Korean analysis

WATERLOO, Ont.—Mennonite concepts of peace and nonviolence provide a different way to speak to the divisions between North and South Korea, says a South Korean professor. Sang Gyoo Lee's proposal to write on Menno Simons from a Korean perspective has earned him the 2000 Frank H. Epp Memorial Fund award from Conrad Grebel College in Waterloo.

Lee, a professor of church history at KosinUniversity in Pusan, notes the absence of Korean-language scholarly papers or monographs on Menno Simons or Mennonites. But Lee does not simply want to translate current texts. Instead, he says, he wants to approach the material from a Korean perspective, in light of Koreans' recent past of war, separation and now inching toward reconciliation.

Choice Books begins ministry in 42nd state

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Choice Books has expanded into the Pacific Northwest, opening a district office in McMinnville, Ore. Choice Books is now operating in 42 states.

"I am delighted to be part of this new Choice Books initiative on the West Coast," says Oregon District manager Ray Yoder.

Choice Books, with a central office in Harrisonburg, is organized into seven not-for-profit regional distributorships owned and operated by local congregations, area conferences or mission agencies. Choice Books sells about 3.5 million books a year in about 4,500 retail locations from coast to coast.

Low German Bible expected in 2004

WINNIPEG—The 100,000 Low German-speaking Mennonites in the world who are not fluent in another language can expect to have a Low German Bible available to them by 2004.

Ed Zacharias, a former mission worker with the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference, is translating the Old Testament. He is supported by the EMMC, Evangelical Mennonite Conference, Canadian Mennonite Brethren Conference, Mennonite Central Committee and United Bible Society. A Low German translation of the New Testament was completed in the 1980s.—*EMMC Recorder*

Goshen College dedicates Sarasota, Fla., campus

SARASOTA, Fla.—Goshen (Ind.) College's new branch facility in Sarasota was dedicated Nov. 5. An extension program of Goshen, the Sarasota campus offers computer certification programs, personal enrichment classes and adult degree-completion programs in organizational management and management information systems.

by the way ...

Correction: Lloyd L. Ramseyer served the longest tenure as president of a Mennonite college, leading Bluffton (Ohio) College for 27 years, from 1938 to 1965. That information was incorrect in the Oct. 31 issue.

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Births

Falk, Emma Viola, Oct 17, to Debrah (Martin) and Jonathan Falk, Wheat Ridge, Colo.

Hepler, Anna Grace, Sept. 6, to Marcia Bender and Scott Hepler, South Woodstock, Vt.

Maloy, Luke Edmond, Oct. 30, to Brian and Kathleen (Kelly) Maloy, Philadelphia.

Miller, Delaney Marilyn, Sept. 1, to B. J. and Jenna (Graber) Miller, Wayland, Iowa.

Nice, Abigail Diane, Aug. 19, to Tonya Nice, Telford, Pa.

Nolt, Lydia Mae, Oct. 20, to Rachel (Miller) and Steve Nolt, Goshen, Ind.

Richer, Mason Lee, Oct. 26, to Michelle (Miller) and Scott Richer, Hesston, Kan.

Schlatter, Briana-Sue Louise, Sept. 1, to David and Lori (Schmitz) Schlatter, Wayland, Iowa.

Schopp, Ethan Daniel, Oct. 27, to Dan and Marcia (Oswald) Schopp, Minier, Ill.

Short, Erik Tanner, Nov. 2, to Ryan and Sarah (Klingelsmith) Short, Archbold, Ohio.

Simms, Chase Andrew James, Oct. 28, to Heather (Bussey) and Jonah Simms, Hartville, Ohio.

Marriages

Brenneman/Quehl: Paul Brenneman, Woodstock, Ont., and Katherine Quehl, Tavistock, Ont., Oct. 14 at Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tavistock.

Cross/Farmer: Jeff Cross, New Paris, Ind., and Kathy Farmer, Tulsa, Okla., Oct. 20 at Benton, Ind.

Dueck/Gilhooly: James Dueck, Steinbach, Man., and Shannon Gilhooly, Oct. 8 at Calgary.

Hammond/King: Jeff Hammond, Ohio, and Donita King, Bellefontaine, Ohio, Oct. 21 at South Union Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio.

Hiebert/Hochstetler: Lisa Hiebert, Wichita, Kan., and John Hochstetler, Wichita, Oct. 14 at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita.

Kliewer/Leaman: Allen Kliewer, Lakewood, Colo., and Arlene Garber Leaman, Chambersburg, Pa., Sept. 16 at Marion Mennonite Church, Chambersburg.

Neuhouser/Rinehart: Jonathan Neuhouser, Grabill, Ind., and Kimberly Rinehart, Princeton, Ind., Sept. 30 at Bethel Memorial Church, Princeton.

Shue/Swartzentruber: Tim Shue, Harper, Kan., and Jennifer Swartzentruber, Kidron, Ohio, Oct. 14 at Kidron Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Gering, Hilda Waltner, 90, Ritzville, Wash., died Oct. 26. Spouse: Ralph Gering. Parents: John and Maria Schrag Waltner (deceased). Other survivors: children Gordon, Curtis, Warren; seven grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 31 at Menno Mennonite Church, Ritzville.

Handrich, Robert, 74, Fairview, Mich., died Oct. 22 of kidney failure. Spouse: Grace Handrich. Parents: Arnold and Fay Handrich (deceased). Other survivors: children Douglas, Kay Jansen, Ted, Lynn, Michael; 18 grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 26 at Fairview Mennonite Church.

Herr, Edith, 78, Leola, Pa., died Oct. 26. Parents: John and Edith Landis Herr (deceased). Funeral: Oct. 28 at Mennonite Home, Oreville Chapel, Lancaster, Pa.

Hostetler, Clara Yoder, 101, Punta Gorda, Fla., died Oct. 15. Spouse: Uriel Hostetler (deceased). Parents: D. B. and Sarah Yoder (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Lou King, Carol Yoder, John; five grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren; two stepgreat-grandchildren; two stepgreat-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 20 at West Liberty, Ohio.

Krahn, John, 87, Steinbach, Man., died Oct. 13. Spouse: Helen Krahn. Funeral: Oct. 16 at Steinbach Mennonite Church.

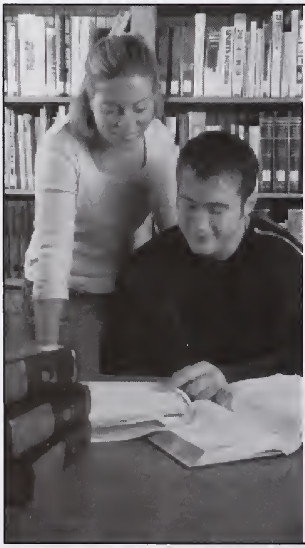
Mitchell, Florence Ida Rhoads, 89, Chenoa, Ill., died Oct. 24. Spouse: Franklin Mitchell (deceased). Parents: William and Mary Brown Rhoads (deceased). Survivors: children Miriam Nofsinger, Doris Dowding; eight grandchildren; 20 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Oct. 28 at Meadows Mennonite Church, Chenoa.

Peachey, Urie, 77, Belleville, Pa., died Oct. 24. Spouse: Naomi Kurtz Peachey. Parents: Aaron and Katie Peachey Peachey. Other survivors: children Glen, Gladys Leasure; three grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 28 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Souder, Wilmer Jr., 73, Telford, Pa., died Oct. 20. Spouse: Joyce Alderfer Souder. Parents: Wilmer and Marietta Souder Sr. (deceased). Other survivors: children Blaine, Joyce Landis, Janis Derstine, Nancy; nine grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 23 at Franconia (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Stauffer, Orpha Benner, 86, Sellersville, Pa., died Oct. 29. Spouse: Clayton Stauffer (deceased). Parents: Harrison and Annie Kulp Benner (deceased). Survivors: children Freida Lynn, Martine Shelly, Margaret Leonard, Alta Yoder; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 3 at Spring City, Pa.

Yoder, Walter, 92, Souderton, Pa., died Oct. 29 of pneumonia and respiratory failure. Spouse: Grace Alderfer Yoder. Parents: William and Annie Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Edna Swartley, Clyde; 11 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 2 at Souderton Mennonite Homes.



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classifieds

- **Prince of Peace Mennonite Church**, Anchorage, Alaska, small family-oriented church founded on Anabaptist teachings, seeks part-time ***pastaral leadership***. Inquiries to Rosetta Landis, 907-337-5813; email <goldpan@alaska.net>. Information available upon request.

- **Mount Vernon Mennonite Church**, Kirkwood, Pa., is seeking a full-time ***lead pastar*** with a strong commitment to biblical preaching and a vision to reach the community for Christ.

  Contact John Beitler, 717-529-6071; email <mtvernonmennonite@juno.com>.

- **Beaver Camp** seeks a ***program specialist*** starting spring 2001. Primary responsibilities are children's resident camp programs and challenge course. Salary and benefit package.

  Send resume to Emanuel Gingerich, HC 62 Box 221, Lowville, NY 13367-9115; email <emanuel@beavercamp.org>.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered education setting. Seeking ***director of alumni relations and communications***: Cultivate relationships with alumni through campus events and alumni projects, support advancement activities, coordinate all forms of communication for Western, including publications, advertising and external media. Excellent communication skills with a strong interest in marketing and public relations are required.

  Contact Darrel White, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

- **Wooster Mennonite Church** is seeking a half-time ***youth pastor***. Candidates must have a strong commitment to Christ and to Anabaptist beliefs, as well as an excitement to see young people follow Christ.

  For more information, please contact or send resume to Wooster Mennonite Church, 1563 Beall Ave., Wooster, OH 44691; email <WoosterMC@sssnet.com>.

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- **Freeman Academy**, Freeman, S.D., grades 5-12, seeks full-time ***admissions recruiter***. Base pay $15,000 plus $500 per student. Contact 605-925-4237; fax 605-925-4271.

- **All God's Children**, a history of ***100 years af planting churches*** and witnessing for God in Philadelphia, by Eastern Mennonite Missions; published in 2000 by the Philadelphia District of the Mennonite Church. Writers: Jeff Gingerich and Miriam Stoltzfus. $14.95/$1.50 postage. 82 pages and over 100 pictures. An excellent Christmas gift.

  Order from Miriam Stoltzfus, 2063 Hill Rd., Perkiomenville, PA 18074.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 school accredited by Association of Christian Schools International and Middle States Association and accountable to local churches, seeks a ***chief administrator*** committed to Jesus Christ and Christian education. Teaching and administrative experience preferred. School located in eastern Lancaster County, 50 miles west of Philadelphia. Position available spring/summer 2001.

  Send resume to Search Committee, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; fax 610-286-0350.

- **Franconia Mennonite Church** is seeking a full-time ***youth pastar*** who will join the current pastoral team. Candidates must possess strong Anabaptist beliefs and have a passion for youth. Located in southeastern Pa., Montgomery County, Franconia has an exciting and growing jr. and sr. high youth program.

  Interested people should send their resume to Search Committee, Franconia Mennonite Church, P.O. Box 26, Franconia, PA 18924; email <info@franconiamennonite.org>.

- **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary** is seeking an ***assaciate dean for leadership education***. This person will be responsible to coordinate continuing education opportunities for pastors and laypeople through the newly emerging AMBS Church Leadership Center, coordinate the conference-based theological education programs, direct and coordinate the pastoral studies distance education program, and assist the dean with academic administration. Qualifications include an advanced degree in adult education or ministries or the willingness to pursue such a degree; strong communication and administrative skills, ability to work with pastors, laypeople and denominational leaders; knowledge of online and distance education technologies; and knowledge of and commitment to Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. The position is a full-time position. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer. Minorities are especially encouraged to apply.

  Send curriculum vitae, three references and letter indicating interest, available and ability to meet qualifications to Dr. Loren L. Johns, Academic Dean, AMBS, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517-1999; <ljohns@ambs.edu>.

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By **Ted Grimsrud,** *foreword by* **James E. Brenneman**

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- **Commitment to voluntary service?** Experience in administration, counseling and voluntary service unit life? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for a ***coordinator for Lancaster County Service Program,*** which includes 30+ volunteers from Canada, Brazil, Germany, United States, Switzerland and South Africa, who work at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa.

Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, email <cdb@mcc.org>, for more information about this full-time leadership position that opens June 1, 2001. Application review begins Jan. 1, 2001.

- **Africa knowledge, experience and vision?** Administrative expertise? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for an ***Africa co-director*** to share administrative oversight for MCC work and witness in Africa, starting spring 2001. MCC has programs and about 200 staff in 19 African countries, with a 1999 total budget of $4.6 million.

Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, email <cdb@mcc.org>, if you are interested in this leadership position. Application review begins Dec. 1, 2000.

- **Executive director for new mission agency of Mennonite Church USA:** Applications are invited for a full-time ***chief executive officer*** to lead the new mission agency to be formed by transformation of the Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions into one agency in mid-2001.

Qualifications: Spiritual maturity; commitment to the theology and values of Mennonite Church USA; passion for mission; ability to lead an emerging, many-faceted ministry; ability to work collaboratively with a diverse constituency; organizational development and executive management skills; strong communication and relational skills; innovative and visionary; global awareness; committed to ethnic sensitivity and anti-racism.

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Send inquiries and applications to Herman Bontrager, Chair of Search Committee, 908 Oak St., Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-2519; 717-355-2995; email <hbontrager@onemain.com>.

- **Bluffton College** seeks applicants in ***business/management*** with expertise in human resources, management and organization behavior for a tenure track position in the economics and business administration department, beginning fall 2001. Doctorate (or ABD) in business administration, management, organization behavior, human resources management or industrial/organizational psychology. Course load, based on the successful candidate's interests, will include graduate and undergraduate teaching. Consideration of applications will begin Jan. 15, 2001, and continue until an appointment is made. Bluffton College is a growing, Mennonite-related college committed to and shaped by that historic peace church's traditions. See <http://www.bluffton.edu>.

Send letter of interest, vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

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Resumes for either position should be forwarded to: Ron Price, c/o Zion Mennonite Church, 149 Cherry Lane, PO Box 64495, Souderton, PA 18964; email <PriceR@univest.net>.

Watch for our 2000 Index in the Dec. 26 issue.

by Rich Preheim

Persecuted for the cross (I)

Despite claims that it allows religious freedom, the Vietnamese government still considers belief in Christianity and other religions as dangerous threats that need to be eradicated, according to government documents leaked to *ChristianWeek.*

The documents—four stamped "secret" and two stamped "top secret"—include detailed directions for "propagandizing the people who have been influenced by religion" and a pledge to "expose and report" anyone who spreads Christianity. Another document, titled "The Problem of the Enemy Exploiting Religion," states that 30 percent of the Vietnamese people are adherents of a religion. "So it is clear that it is [a] powerful force among the masses worthy of consideration," the document says.

The Vietnamese government officially recognizes Buddhism (50 percent of the country's population), Roman Catholicism (8 percent), Hoa Hoa (2 percent), Protestantism (1 percent), Cao Dai (1 percent) and Islam (0.1 percent).

ChristianWeek says Christianity has been growing by leaps and bounds, from 6,000 believers in 1945 to 300,000 in 1995. One government document notes that pastors released from "re-education camps" usually returned to the communities and "resumed their religious activities." Another document lamented the low quality of atheist propaganda used to try and stop religion.

Persecuted for the cross (II)

Vietnam, not surprisingly, was one of 15 countries highlighted by the U.S. Department of State as among the worst offenders of religious freedom. Other such countries cited in the State Department's "2000 Annual Report for International Religious Freedom" were Afghanistan, Burma, China, Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Laos, North Korea, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Sudan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The report also noted countries that have made improvements in religious freedom, including Azerbaijan, Chile, France, Ghana, Kuwait, Philippines, Qatar, Turkey and Ukraine.

The State Department has not been the only one recently weighing in on religious freedom. Open Doors, founded by Brother Andrew of *God's Smuggler* fame, has announced its top 10 worst persecutors of Christians, led by Saudi Arabia. The rest of Open Doors' "Hall of Shame" includes Afghanistan, China, Chechnya, Sudan, Yemen, North Korea, Maldives, Iran and Morocco.

Matters of life and death

Taking a life is acceptable when that life belongs to a convicted criminal and is done by the state but not when it is a terminally ill patient and assisted by a physician, a recent survey of 518 U.S. Protestant pastors discovered. Seventy-two percent of those surveyed were somewhat or strongly opposed to outlawing the death penalty. Attitudes about legalizing physician-assisted suicide were even greater, opposed by 83 percent of the pastors.

Those were just two questions on social and political issues asked by Ellison Research. Other findings included:

- Seventy-three percent of pastors surveyed strongly or somewhat support school vouchers to allow parents to send their children to religious or nonreligious private schools.
- Ninety-two percent support laws allowing student-led prayers at public events
- Fifty percent said they would "definitely" vote for George W. Bush for President, compared with 9 percent for Al Gore.

The survey even asked the pastors which version of the Bible they relied on most for their work. The New International Version was the most popular, picked by 34 percent, followed by the King James Version at 24 percent.

On camels and eyes of needles

It's been a long-held contention in some circles that wealth contributes to spiritual decay. Now comes a Gallup poll, courtesy of *Sightings,* that shows that the majority of Americans with the most money agree with that sentiment. The poll found that 62 percent of people with $50,000 or more in annual income say wealth is connected with spiritual decline. Twenty-five percent think wealth promotes spiritual growth.

Among those making less than $15,000 a year, 48 percent sy money leads to spiritual decline and 47 percent say it leads to growth. Among those making between $15,000 and $29,999, 53 percent say wealth contributed to decline, and 30 percent say it advances spirituality. In the $30,000-$49,999 group, 49 percent mention decline while 39 percent say growth.

Saintly connection

Here's a variation of the Mennonite Game: Katharine Drexel, who this year became only the second U.S. woman named a Catholic saint, was the daughter of a Brethren woman, reports the Church of the Brethren's *Messenger.* Hannah Jane Lonstroth Drexel died 34 days after giving birth to Katharine.

Tidbits

- **In the recent presidential election, 61 percent of nonchurchgoers voted for Al Gore, while 63 percent of voters who go to church more than weekly chose George W. Bush.—*National Catholic Reporter***
- **The divorce rate for "born-again" Christians in the United States is 27 percent, compared to 25 percent for the rest of the U.S. population.—*The Observer***
- **Women make up more than 70 percent of China's official Protestant denomination.—*Amity News Service***
- **A Seventh-day Adventist congregation is established somewhere in the world every 4.7 hours. —*Christianity Today***
- **The American Institute of Physics has estimated the number of angels that can dance on the head of a pin to be 10(64). —*U.S. Catholic***

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Everett J. Thomas

Giving thanks after hard times

As we sit down with friends and family this Thanksgiving, most of us will probably not thank God that Mennonite Church USA has survived a season of poverty and crisis. Perhaps we should.

When Chief Massasoit and his 90 men joined the Pilgrims at the first Thanksgiving, they all gave thanks for surviving hard times. Those three days of feasting and prayers in the autumn of 1621 followed a year of hardship and death for the Pilgrims on Plymouth Rock. For the original citizens of Massachusetts, the feasting followed several years of epidemics that decimated Massasoit's people and left them weakened against his enemy, the Narrangansett.

After issuing a thanksgiving proclamation, Plymouth Colony's Governor Bradford sent four men fowling. They returned with enough ducks, geese and turkeys to feed the crowd for weeks. Chief Massasoit then sent his men hunting. They returned with five deer, which they bestowed on the governor. Together, these two beleaguered groups joined in gratitude for having survived a season of poverty and crisis.

Such is the tradition our country observes this week for a few hours on Thanksgiving Day. We feast on turkey, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie, the dishes supposedly served at that 1621 potluck. But as we sit down with family and friends 379 years later, we might also thank God for bringing the new Mennonite Church in the United States through some tough times. In our case, however, the poverty we have survived is spiritual; the crises have been in the formation of a new denomination.

This is the heart of Thanksgiving: to mark God's providence for the past and remind each other that God will provide for the future.

In our Nov. 7 issue (p. 7), a Mennonite pastor from India described us in terms that were unflattering and unsettling. "North Americans," said the Indian pastor, "are materially blessed but not spiritually involved." The article went on to note that Mennonites in India can offer us great spiritual resources.

In this issue (p. 6), Jim Wallis quotes a Republican policy leader as saying, "America's affluence puts this nation in great spiritual danger, and our lack of concern for the poor is a sign of moral failure."

An Anabaptist brother from India confronts our lack of spiritual involvement. A leader in Washington describes our country's moral failure in relation to the poor. Both are pointing to an invisible poverty.

Poverty of any sort creates crisis. It is possible that our difficulties in forming Mennonite Church USA are related to spiritual impoverishment. However, this is the time to thank God for bringing us through a winter of dissension and discontent. There are, after all, signs of hope for the next chapter in this transformation story. Here are a few Thanksgiving prayers I offer this year:

I am thankful that our church leaders are finding new ways to meld worship and work. The most recent meeting of the Constituency Leaders Council modeled a new form of discernment which allowed God's Spirit freer movement than is usually possible in a parliamentary process.

I am grateful that those who worked on the mission transformation process report that they have been personally transformed. Rather than a proposal that cobbles old agencies together, we are promised a design that will help each congregation become a center of mission.

Finally, I am thankful that God is helping us through difficult conversations about membership in the new denomination. Most denominational leaders are glad for the new membership guidelines. James Schrag, who leads the transformation project, characterizes this progress as gained ground. We are at a place today that most of us dared not imagine just one year ago.

This, then, is the heart of Thanksgiving: to mark God's providence for the past and remind each other that God will provide for the future. May our thanksgiving dinner prayers acknowledge the difficulties of the past year. May our thanks be to God for standing with us through these hard times.—*ejt*

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the Mennonite

December 5, 2000

embrace Ishmael and Isaac

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24 Advent makes us wait

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Judgment and forgiveness

In her article "Abortion's Other Victims" (Oct. 24), Ruth Thiessen ironically illustrates why those of us who have chosen to have abortions sometimes carry such a burden of guilt. She makes it clear that she has judged the morality of such a decision, referring to "indulgence in premarital or extramarital sex," "rationalization" and claiming that those women who have had abortions were "lacking in courage to do the right thing." Judging someone to have made a mistake and then tolerating the perceived mistake is not forgiveness, it is judgment. God alone judges, and God alone forgives. Our job is to remember that others also strive to live ethically, to remember that we do not truly understand their wholeness and to judge only ourselves. Walking alongside another requires that one not have already decided what the other ought to think and do.

I had an abortion at age 20, when I became pregnant about the same time that my husband and I became engaged. I was using birth control, an IUD that had been inserted by my father, a physician and a leader in his church. My pregnancy was, at least in that respect, a product of incest. Proper sexual boundaries had never existed in my family of origin, and I felt confused about these issues and the abortion for more than 10 years. The feeling of guilt was most deeply rooted in my sense of having disappointed my father, who suggested and arranged for the abortion.

That guilt ceased somewhere around the birth of our third child, when I was 30. While gazing at my newborn in awe and love, I realized that if we had had that child when I was 20, this particular child in the crib would not exist. The children that we would have conceived at other moments, the products of other eggs and sperm, would not be these very children, whose lives are a vital part of this world and whom we love and cherish. I suddenly named that unborn child and was able to mourn. I continue to feel sadness but not guilt. I think occasionally about how old that child would now be and imagine a possible life of that child. And then my thoughts turn with gratitude and joy to the real, nonimagined lives and activities of our children. I don't know how anyone could suggest that the life of the child who didn't live would have been of greater worth than the lives of these children. I don't know that having that child would have been "the right thing" to do, somehow more "right" than having the children we do have.

I do not consider abortion a trivial thing. It is a difficult resolution to a difficult situation. I would not dare suggest that I know if another woman ought or ought not to make that choice. I do not want or need the "love" and "forgiveness" of someone who thinks she knows with certainty that I made a mistake. I do try to lovingly understand how someone imagines that she can see any more clearly than I do—which is always "through a glass darkly"—the proper course of my life or God's will for my life.
—Name withheld by request

Faith meets faith

Thank you for printing Alain Epp Weaver's "Speaking the Truth in Jewish-Christian Dialogue" (Oct. 31) and his earlier article, "Parables of the Kingdom and Other Faiths" (April 25). These articles have become a springboard for internal reflection for me. I am encouraged to read that, after centuries of anti-Semitism in which all the churches participated, including early followers of Martin Luther and Menno Simons, there now is a statement endorsed by various Catholic and Protestant bodies, scores of Jewish academics and rabbis and leaders in Jerusalem. This statement acknowledges "God's enduring covenant with the Jewish people" and "celebrates the contribution of Judaism to Christian faith." I am encouraged by the suggestion that we accept this statement as a gift.

Weaver's earlier article describes the plurality of other faiths that we encounter every day and reminds us that we should not set limits to the saving power of God. I would appreciate future articles from writers who have observed other faiths that speak as parables of the kingdom or as breakthroughs of the kingdom.
—Walter Braun, Winnipeg

Everyone who writes seems to be against the Jews and for the Palestinians. Over and over again in the Old Testament, God promises that the Jews will return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. We can't fight what God has promised.

It is right to cry because of the Palestinian children who have been killed. If you had been a leader among the Palestinians, would you have dismissed school so the children could go protest on the frontlines? Arafat is willing to sacrifice anyone to get the world's sympathy.

When one thinks of all the places in the world where Jews have been killed, Palestine pales in comparison.*—Dorothy D. Liechty, Berne, Ind.*

theMennonite

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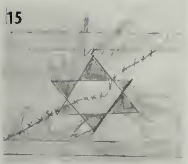

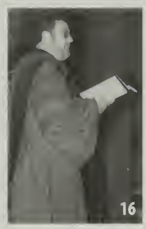

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readers say

I read with great interest "Speaking the Truth in Jewish-Christian Dialogue." I have followed and occasionally participated in similar dialogues while living in Berlin in the 1970s. Thank you for bringing this important topic to the surface once again. We need more dialogue and understanding between these two groups, as we do with most other groups. Our outreach has a long way to go.—*John R. Friesen, Winnipeg*

Pondering postmodernism

Ted Lewis' "The Promise and Peril of Postmodernism" (Nov. 7) captured the essence of my experience with postmodernism. As a 23-year-old recent college graduate, I have been profoundly impacted by postmodernism's "blessings" and, more often than not, overwhelmed by its "perils." Exposure to diverse cultural and religious traditions has sharpened my concern for disempowered people while challenging the validity of my understanding of truth as found in Jesus. The struggle is real. Thanks to the author for highlighting both the benefits and the pitfalls of postmodernism and for clarifying the origins of this trend. I would question, however, Lewis' statement that it is the youth who bring postmodernity into the church. In my experience, many young people are learning relativism from their professors, parents and church leaders.—*Maria Clymer, Winchester, Va.*

I would like to add one book to the bibliography included with Lewis' article. I have found Miroslav Volf's *Exclusion and Embrace* to be a tremendously helpful integration regarding questions of identity, politics, diversity and conflict. He is ably conversant with biblical content, postmodernist and feminist philosophy and work with conflict management.—*Vern Rempel, Denver*

Cover photo by Gordon Houser

Passive payment

Colombian Mennonite leader Ricardo Esquivia, as quoted in the Nov. 21 issue, said bluntly to American Christians, "Through your tax dollars you are supporting war" ("Colombian Leader Challenges Churches"). He was referring to the recently approved $1.3 billion of U.S. aid to Colombia, most of it earmarked for the Colombian military.

Esquivia's comment raises anew questions about our Mennonite peace witness. In preparation for a recent presentation on nonviolence, I discovered that the United States spends roughly three times as much annually on its military budget as Russia, China, Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya and Syria combined—the countries usually pointed to as our greatest potential enemies. Forty-seven percent of our federal budget in 2001 will go to military needs. We are spending almost as much defending the nation as we are on the nation we are defending. Actually, this kind of spending has little to do with defending and perhaps everything to do with political, corporate and military attempts to dominate key areas of the world.

And all this occurs without any of us having to face a draft and the specter of personal involvement. In this age of high-tech weapons, our bodies are no longer needed; now it's our dollars. I struggle to know how our peace theology speaks to this changed situation.

I wonder if people in the future will ask, "How could they have paid so passively?" Ricardo Esquivia has seen firsthand in Colombia the violent results of some of our payments. I think we need to ponder his words seriously.—*Larry Leaman-Miller, Denver*

> **Through your tax dollars you are supporting war.**
>
> *—Ricardo Esquivia, "Colombian Mennonite Leader Challenges Churches," Nov. 21*

Temperance time

Is temperance part of Mennonite teaching, a membership guideline along with the "other one"? Consider that:

- Teenage drinking continues at an all-time high.
- The main cause of death for people ages 12 to 26 is vehicle accidents, 70 percent of which are alcohol-related.
- Of the four most common causes for handicapped patients being in some of our institutions, one cause can be reduced greatly by mothers abstaining from the use of alcohol while carrying their children. Alcohol is the most abused drug today.
- More than 1,000 people needlessly die daily in our country because of tobacco use.

Why was the once-a-quarter temperance lesson dropped from our study materials? Maybe we don't need an extra membership guideline, but certainly something from the pulpit and Sunday school materials.—*LaVerne Graber, Wayland, Iowa*

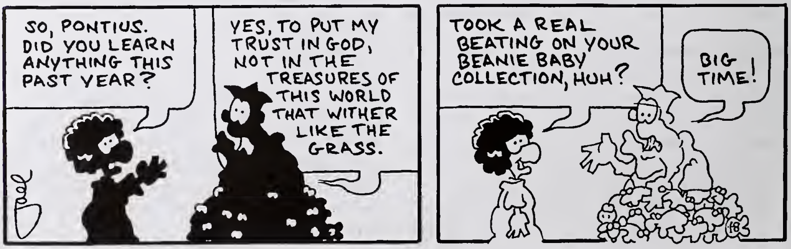
Taking advantage?

What is going on with the church of Jesus Christ? This question hit me full force in the past year as I experienced the economic cost of being a church member above and beyond freewill giving. Will someone tell me why fees are charged for doing the work of Christ's church? In today's world, charges are made for funerals, $100 and up; weddings, $50 and more; special prayers, $20; Christian music $50-$150; use of a church building, $50-$200; special sermons, $100 and more. For non-Christians or nonchurch members, the fees are often increased substantially.

We read and hear admonitions that we are to be loving and caring for others supporting the family of God, accepting of God's grace. It would be a shame if God's grace was taken advantage of. If God does not charge a fee, we need to so the poor, the homeless, the handicapped, the lower intellectuals do not take advantage of something they have not paid for.

Was not this one of the reasons the Reformation came about—resentment toward the church for demanding money for God's services? Does anyone see a danger in this trend in our church to charge for services, talents, etc.? —*Ken Fast, Newton, Kan.*

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


SO, PONTIUS. DID YOU LEARN ANYTHING THIS PAST YEAR?
YES, TO PUT MY TRUST IN GOD, NOT IN THE TREASURES OF THIS WORLD THAT WITHER LIKE THE GRASS.
TOOK A REAL BEATING ON YOUR BEANIE BABY COLLECTION, HUH?
BIG TIME!

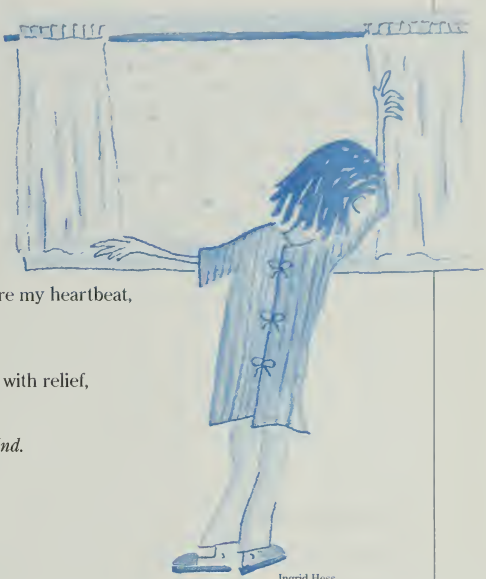
December

by Mary Beechy

Today I laugh in the face of the hospital chaplain,
who comes in and asks,
Isn't it nice that God sent all the pretty snow for you to look at?
Doesn't he know that I've been lying in this bed
for three more days than the Savior lay in the tomb,
and I still can't tell him which direction my window faces
to save my life?

I remember that night when I unplugged the wires that measure my heartbeat,
and walked across the room completely unattached.
I pulled back the window shade
just as the night nurse ran in from the hallway.
She noticed the dangling mass of cords by my bed and gasped with relief,
"My God, I thought we'd lost you!"

Mary Beechy attends Eighth Street Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.



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Embrace Ishmael and Isaa

Peace can only come in the Middle East when Jews and Palestinians are treated as equals.

by Calvin E. Shenk

I am distressed by the recent, tragic events in the Middle East—not only by what is shown on television but because of my acquaintance and experience with Jews and Palestinians. At the heart of these tragic events is the age-old conflict between Isaac and Ishmael, Jews and Palestinian Arabs.

For the last seven years, Marie, my wife, and I have spent spring semesters in Jerusalem at the Tantur Ecumenical Institute, on the border between Israel and Palestine. Here we meet Jews and Palestinians. Earlier we led four Eastern Mennonite University (EMU, in Harrisonburg, Va.) Middle East semesters, which included intense interaction with Jews and Palestinians.

On one occasion we arranged for EMU students to visit one of the most radical settlement groups in the middle of Hebron. There we heard Miriam Levenger, wife of the settlement rabbi, argue that Jews are forcibly settling the land—which has belonged to Palestinians for generations—because that is what Joshua commanded them to do.

Many Western Christians identify with the Jews because the covenant continued through the line of Abraham and Isaac. In doing so, they have neglected or discriminated against Ishmael's people, specifically Palestinians.

Sometime afterward, Baruch Goldstein, a militant Jewish fundamentalist, shot dead 29 Muslims during prayer in the Mosque of Abraham in Hebron—the traditional site where Ishmael and Isaac buried Abraham.

About a year later, in three suicide bus bombings within a week, nearly 50 Jewish lives were taken in the name of God by a militant Islamic movement. One Sunday morning I walked to the site of the third bombing. People were lighting candles and praying. I paused to pray for peace. On the way home I met a Palestinian Christian friend who was weeping in sorrow for the innocent Jewish bus passengers.

I am not only distressed by recent events and the injustice behind them. I'm also pained because many Western Christians, including some Mennonites, use the Bible to take sides in the conflict, identifying primarily with Isaac and his descendants, the Jews. Western Christians aren't sure what to do with Ishmael and his descendants, Arab Palestinians. We need to look again at Scripture to gain perspective on this ancient conflict.

Biblical perspectives: In Genesis, Ishmael was called a child of the flesh, born of Hagar, a result of Abraham and Sarah's impatient attempt to help fulfill the promise of God. Abraham loved Ishmael, and when God told Abraham that Sarah would have a son, Abraham was dumbfounded and exclaimed, “O that Ishmael might live in your sight.”

God replied that Sarah would bear Isaac, with whom the covenant would be established, but that God would also bless Ishmael and make him a great nation (Genesis 17:15-22). Ishmael was circumcised on the same day as Abraham and all the males of Abraham's household (17:23-27), suggesting that Abraham wanted Ishmael to personally participate in covenant blessings even if he was not the channel of those blessings.

When Sarah insisted that Hagar and Ishmael be sent away, Abraham reluctantly obliged and provided them with food and water. When Ishmael was about to die for lack of water, Hagar cried out, “Do not let me look at the death of the child.” An angel assured Hagar that God heard (a play on the name Ishmael, which means “God hears”). (See Genesis 21:16-17.)

God was compassionate, and in these tangled human relationships divine mercy did not fail. Instead God demonstrated the dignity and worth of every human life. Ishmael grew up preserved by the protection of God, and he and his people became Bedouin nomads (Genesis 16:11-12; 21:21; 25:16-18). The covenant choice of Isaac and his descendants is not a rejection of Ishmael any more than it is a rejection of us Gentiles.

Questions for Christians: What do these biblical texts suggest about our relationship to Ishmael and his descendants? Many Western Christians identify with the Jews because the covenant continued through the line of Abraham and Isaac. In doing so, they have neglected or discriminated against Ishmael's people, specifically Palestinians. Western Christians often equate Arab with Muslim; Arab is not synonymous with Muslim. But while Islam began among Arabs and many Arabs are Muslims, Arabs predate Islam. There were Arab Christians before Islam.

Can we as Western Christians embrace Arabs, the children of Ishmael? Can we make a place for Ishmael's people in our theology? Ishmael was not lost to God, and neither should Ishmael be lost to Western Christians. Abraham's sending Hagar and Ishmael away was a description of what happened, not a prescription for a permanent pattern of relationship. If God responded to Ishmael's distress then, does God not hear the distress of Ishmael today? If God hears Ishmael, should not Western Christians embrace Ishmael along with Isaac?

Dignity for the children of Ishmael: A Palestinian boy herds sheep outside Hebron on the West Bank.

A Jewish response to Ishmael: Some Jews express a more positive attitude toward Ishmael than many Christians do. Recently I learned that the Genesis 21–22 portion is read during the Jewish celebration of Rosh Hashanah (New Year). Cherie Brown, a Jewish woman, proposed four implications of these texts for Jews: (1) Ishmael exists, and Jews abandon their humanity if they pretend Ishmael (Arab people) do not exist or take no responsibility to hear their cries. (2) There is no pain so great, no estrangement so final, that reconciliation is not possible. Isaac and Ishmael have the same father, and their fates are inextricably tied to one another. (3) When Jews refuse to respond to the cry of Hagar and focus on their own concerns, they cut themselves off from their humanity. (4) Jews are asked to stop seeing themselves always as the victim and to stop living a life based on victimization.

A Christian response: What do these Christian and Jewish perspectives mean for our current attitude and response toward Arab Palestinians? Western Christians should emphasize reconciliation between Jews (Isaac) and Arabs (Ishmael), particularly in the Israeli-Palestinian context. God is not pleased when we discriminate against Arab Palestinians, be they Christian or Muslim. Elias Chacour, an Arab Christian minister in Galilee, calls Jews and Arabs "blood brothers" because they have the same father, Abraham. He insists the first step in reconciling Jew and Arab Palestinian is the restoration of human dignity. Chacour is not asking that Arabs have priority but that there be equality. He says, "It does no good for you to sympathize with me as a Palestinian if it means that you hate the Jewish people as a result."

Arabs often say they feel rejected by Western Christians. Even Arab Christians sometimes feel discriminated against because they are "children of Ishmael." Rather than abandon the children of Ishmael to second class or underclass, Western Christians are called to promote dignity for the children of Ishmael. Ishmael will have dignity when he can live in peace and security with Isaac, when he is no longer harassed and humiliated, when he is liberated from fear and hatred. Both Ishmael and Isaac can regain dignity as they empathize with each other's pain and share the land.

Can we promote the ways that help each group—Jews and Arabs—overcome hatred and revenge and renounce violence in word and action? Christians should work for release from suffering, discrimination, despair and hopelessness so that inequality and injustice give way to partnership between equals. Isaac and Ishmael both belong to the land and each other. Bridges must be built between members of the same family.

Conclusion: Both Jew and Arab Palestinian need to be liberated. The liberation of one is vitally linked with the other. Only God can give both the power to overcome hatred and bitterness. Only God can give compassion to face the enemy and see the enemy as brother or sister.

Rabbi Sugarman, in the presence of his Israeli Jewish congregation in the synagogue, asked Father Elias to give him a blessing. Chacour, placing his hand on the rabbi's head, pronounced a blessing in Hebrew. The rabbi responded, "I will not become your brother. … I have discovered I already was your brother, and we did not know each other" (*We Belong to the Land* by Elias Chacour). Can we embrace both Ishmael and Isaac? Perhaps this prayer of a Palestinian Christian can help us: "Pray not for Arab or Jew, for Palestinian or Israeli, but pray rather for ourselves, that we might not divide them in our prayers but keep them together in our hearts."

Calvin E. Shenk teaches religion at Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va. He and Marie, his wife, are in an ongoing assignment in the Middle East with Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Central Committee and Eastern Mennonite Missions. They will return there in January 2001.

Christians should work for release from suffering, discrimination, despair and hopelessness so that inequality and injustice give way to partnership between equals.

Growing toward truth

Keisuke Matsumoto heard the good news from Christians who didn't go to war.

by Bethany Swope

On Nov. 7, 1999, nine people gathered for worship at Kitami Mennonite Church, a now 13-year-old congregation on the northern island of Hokkaido in Japan. The seven adults present shared their first impressions of church, Christians and what led them to faith. It was "thinking about baptism" month, as the congregation worked to answer the questions of its newest participant about the meaning of baptism.

The congregation is a family to each other. Their numbers are small, but they are determined to continue together in fellowship. "Even the little handful that we are, to gather together and know that we are met by God is a gift … worth any price," says Mary Beyler, a mission worker in Kitami since 1988, appointed by Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Overseas Mission. She has served in Japan since 1974.

> I was looking for truth that would be truth whether you win or lose the war. I wanted truth that would still be truth in 1,000 years. I came to see that Christianity was that kind of truth.
>
> —*Keisuke Matsumoto*

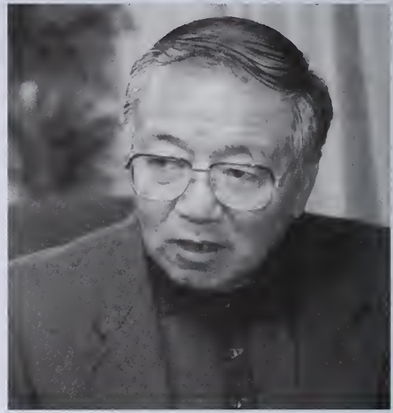
In this first story of a four-part series, Keisuke Matsumoto shares his story. A member of Kamishihoro Mennonite Church, he drove several hours to join the Kitami congregation as a visitor for worship that Nov 7. He spoke each word carefully, with the wisdom of one who has lived many years and experienced many changes.

Keisuke wanted revenge on American Christians. His first contact with Christianity came when he was a teenager, through two American missionaries in his town, Ruth and Rhoda Ressler. "Americans had bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and here they come with 'good news,'" he said.

He wanted revenge for the deaths of two aunts who were killed when bombs hit Tokyo during his childhood. "I went to church to prove that Christian faith is not the truth," he said.

He soon learned that this group of Christians hadn't participated in the war. "If those missionaries hadn't been Mennonite, I would not have become a Christian. The call to peace called me," he said.

"These American Christians were so kind, I gradually gave up the desire for revenge. As I became a Christian, I began to understand that Japan had also done terrible things in the war."


MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Much more humble: Keisuke Matsumoto

It took time for Keisuke to come to faith, 10 years from the time he met the Mennonite missionaries until his baptism at age 29. "I wanted to be sure about Christianity," he said. He had grown up learning right and wrong from government pronouncements. Then, after the war, he was told to mark out textbook passages about those same things because what was right and wrong had changed.

"I was looking for truth that would be truth whether you win or lose the war. I wanted truth that would still be truth in a thousand years. I came to see that Christianity was that kind of truth," he said.

"There is the parable in Matthew about removing the wood from your eye before removing the dirt from someone else's eye. Before I became a Christian, I enjoyed finding everyone else's failings, but it wasn't interesting if anyone else did the same for me.

"It didn't happen all at once, but I'm not so bothered now by failings—in either direction. I'm not perfect, but I'm much more humble."

Keisuke Matsumoto, now retired from his government job, dreams of serving in Mongolia with his wife, Misaho. They hope to be missionaries to street children.

Bethany Swope is a writer for Mennonite Board of Missions.

Mission stories 2

[illegible] series

Growing toward faith

Takuya Tamura wanted to find a faith of his own.

by Bethany Swope

In this second story of a four-part series, Takuya Tamura shares his story. A self-assured yet humble man, he moves comfortably between his roles as professor, father, husband and brother in the church. He shares reflectively.

Takuya wanted to find a faith of his own, not just accept the faith of his parents. He was born into a Buddhist family of milliners. "We were a relatively faithful Buddhist family," he says. Up until first grade, his family went to the Buddhist temple for special occasions. He also remembers that the Buddhist priest came once a month to visit his relatives who lived nearby. He can't remember clearly when he first attended a Christian church.

In 1964, when Takuya was 6 years old, his infant brother died within a week of birth. The local Buddhist priest conducted the funeral. "The Buddhist temple was a frightening place for a child," he says. He also remembers the Buddhist altar that was placed in his home because of the death. "We burned incense. I didn't like the smell."

Sometime after that, Takuya's family moved away from Buddhism toward Christianity, but the steps were not obvious to him at the time. "Several years later, I remember going to a church for a Christmas program," he says. He doesn't know if his parents had become Christians at that point.

After a few more years, he knew clearly that both of his parents were strong believers. When Takuya was 14 years old, his family gave up hat-selling so his father could become a full-time pastor. "We moved to a different city, and we lived in the church," he says. He attended Sunday worship every week.

"During junior high and high school years, many children rebel against their parents. I'm amazed now that I continued to go to church," he says.

It was the people who kept him there. "The church people were kind. I wanted to see them. I enjoyed spending time with them." At high school, he was surprised to learn that he had several Christian classmates. "They were admirable, respected, intelligent students, and they were Christian." These classmates also influenced him to remain connected to the church.

"For me, as a child, the [Buddhist] temple was a dark, fearsome place," he says. "But the church was a place of light, with friendly people. The temple was a place to go just with family and relatives, where you didn't know the priest. At the church, there were many different people, interesting people, to meet.

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Mountains and valleys: Takuya Tamura

"In my childhood, Marvin and Mary Alene Miller and Charles and Ruth Shenk were nearby. When I was a teenager, the Ralph and Genny Buckwalter family was nearby. During my 20s, Marvin and Neta Faye Yoder, Norman and Ruth Kraus, and Wesley and Sue Richard were nearby. After moving to Kitami, Mary Beyler is here. [Mennonite] missionaries have always been with me on my walk of faith."

He couldn't say exactly when he decided to receive baptism because he was part of the church every week. He knows the people at church influenced him, as did large evangelistic meetings he attended. It was important to him to know that he hadn't simply accepted the faith of those around him out of respect, but that he truly had a faith of his own.

> The church people were kind. I wanted to see them. I enjoyed spending time with them.
>
> *—Takuya Tamura*

He was baptized during his first year of high school. Mennonite Board of Missions worker Ralph Buckwalter performed the baptism. "I didn't feel like anything that wonderful or special had happened, but the church people were crying as if it was an important moment," he says.

"Looking back, it was a big event because it was the beginning of a life of faith with mountains and valleys. Some valleys have included not going to church very often, but even with the valleys there were also mountains to bring me back up."

Now a professor of psychology, Takuya faithfully attends Kitami Mennonite Church with his wife, Aoi, their daughter Naomi and their son Kazuki. The Tamuras often welcome Mary Beyler into their home as a friend to Takuya and Aoi and as an aunt to the children.

Bethany Swope is a writer for Mennonite Board of Missions. Parts three and four of this series will appear in our Dec. 12 and 19 issues, respectively.

Working together for good

A close look at the meaning of Romans 8:28

by Tim Geddert

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.—Romans 8:28 (KJV)

That is how I once memorized the verse many years ago. It has often been a source of hope for me, assuring me that all things, even bad things, will turn out for good to those who love God. In fact, there was a time when I interpreted this verse to mean that there really are no bad things that happen to believers.

I have undergone two changes of mind about this verse. The first happened when I realized that modern versions of the Bible translate it differently. The New International Version (NIV), for example, does not say that "all things work together" but that "in all things God works for the good of those who love him." This version attributes the "working out" not to some universal magic but directly to God's active involvement.

Now that I am able to read the verse in the original language (Greek), I know what led to the change. The King James Version (KJV) translators viewed "panta" (all things) as the subject of the verb "sunergei" (work together). The NIV translators view "panta" (all things) as the object of the verb.

Romans 8:28 is not about God working to bring about good things for us (though God also does that) but about God working with us to bring about good things in all situations.

Both versions are grammatically possible in Greek. The word panta has the same form whether it is used as subject or object. However, the NIV version is preferable for the following reasons:

Linguistically: The Greek word "sunergei" (from which the English word synergy comes) does not mean "work out" or "fall in place." In the New Testament it always signifies the active involvement of real actors accomplishing a task. To treat panta as the subject implies that everything that happens is actively and consciously working at the project of making good things happen to people who love God. That kind of claim would be linguistically odd, to say the least.

Theologically: The Scriptures never attribute goodwill and active working to "all things." If good things are being made to happen, it is because God is at work, transforming all things into something they would not become on their own.

To summarize: I once thought Romans 8:28 was about "all things working out" but am now persuaded it is about "God working for good in all situations."

A common project: Now to the second time I changed my understanding of this verse. The biggest problem with the NIV version of this verse is that it still misunderstands what the verb "sunergei" really means. The NIV translation incorrectly represents what God is doing. It treats sunergei as though it means God is "working things together," that is, forming a pattern or mixing ingredients together so that something new emerges. But sunergei is not about one party working various ingredients together; it is about more than one party working together on a common project. The appropriate question is not, What does God work together? but, With whom does God work together?

I have before me a new edition of the NIV, which contains a second footnote to this verse. It says this: "or … works together with those who love him to bring about what is good." On this reading, those who love God are not the beneficiaries of God's interventions; they are God's co-workers. Romans 8:28 is not about God working to bring about good things for us (though God also does that) but about God working with us to bring about good things in all situations.

Both ways of translating ("for us" and "with us") are grammatically possible, so which is better?

In all four other occurrences of sunergei in the New Testament, it carries the meaning of working together as a team (see Mark 16:20; 1

And in everything, as we know, [God] cooperates for good with those who love God and are called according to his purpose.—Revised English Bible

Corinthians 16:16; 2 Corinthians 6:1; James 2:22.) Of these, the first three speak explicitly of God working with people or people working with each other. In the fourth, "faith and works" are viewed metaphorically as two parties working with each other. The only way sunergei is used in the New Testament is when there are two or more parties working together. Moreover, the noun associated with this verb ("sunergos," or co-worker, helper, fellow worker) is also always used to describe two or more parties working with each other (see Romans 16:3,9, 21; 1 Corinthians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 1:24; 8:23; Philippians 2:25; 4:3; Colossians 4:11; 1 Thessalonians 3:2; Philemon 1,24; 2 John 8).

Channels of God's grace: Romans 8:28 is not about God fitting all things together into a pattern for our benefit. It is about God and those who love God working as partners to bring about good in all situations. While we (those who love God and are called according to God's purposes) may at times also be the beneficiaries of God and others working together, this verse is not about that. It is not about the benefits we receive from God's action on our behalf. It is rather a call to those who have been foreknown, predestined, called, justified and glorified (Romans 8:29-30) to be not only recipients of God's grace but also channels of God's grace to others. We were called by God, we love God and thus we join God's work in the world. God is working to bring about good, and we are God's fellow-workers. God's good purposes will often come about in terrible situations, not because someone sat back and trusted God's promise but because someone joined God's work in the world, became God's hands and feet, became a tangible expression of God's love and caring.

Romans 8:28 challenges for us to be that kind of people. If we are, then more people will learn that nothing can separate them from God's love (Romans 8:38-39). Wherever and whenever they feel separated from God's love, God sends co-workers—us—to assure them in concrete and tangible ways that God still loves them. That is, at any rate, the way Romans 8:28 should be interpreted.

Having said all this, I must confess that it is hard to say farewell to an older interpretation that has been with me since childhood and has comforted and encouraged me in difficult times. Must I abandon my earlier view in order to accept my newer insights? Not necessarily.

Sometimes a sentence in the Bible is deliberately ambiguous. Two (or more) options are grammatically possible and both (or more than two) meanings are intended by the author. Perhaps this is one of those situations. Perhaps this verse is about God working both with us and for us to bring about good in tough situations. This understanding would portray the Christian community as a fellowship of grace recipients and grace givers. God along with God's co-workers (our brothers and sisters) have been instrumental in bringing about good things in our lives; now we join God and God's other co-workers to bring about good things in others' lives.

This way of reading Romans 8:28 fits well with the broader context of Romans 8. There we learn that God has not yet made everything turn out for good. That is why all creation, including God's own children, still groan, waiting for their final redemption (vv. 18-27). And that is why, in every imaginable difficulty, we can be assured that God's love never leaves us (vv. 31-39). The community of those being transformed by God (vv. 29,30) first receives God's grace, then passes it on as we work with God to bring about what is good.

God's good purposes will often come about in terrible situations, not because someone sat back and trusted God's promise but because someone joined God's work in the world, became God's hands and feet, became a tangible expression of God's love and caring.

Tim Geddert teaches New Testament at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, Calif. A version of this article appeared in the Mennonite Brethren Herald *(June 23).*

Meetinghouse photo by Laurie L. Oswald

Hendro Soeradi (left), new first vice chair of the reunited Javanese Mennonite Church, enjoys a lighthearted moment with Pudjo Kartiko, the synod's new chair.

Indonesians celebrate healing of split

Meeting resolves schism in country's largest synod

BANDUNGAN, Indonesia—God has answered Adi Walujo's prayers that a longtime schism in the Javanese Mennonite Church would be healed.

Adi, assistant pastor of one of the 89 congregations in the Javanese church—the largest of three Mennonite synods in Indonesia—witnessed God's power to reunite people during a special general assembly Nov. 9-11 at the Elika Retreat Center in the mountains of central Java.

Members of rival factions—divided since 1996 over issues surrounding control of church agencies, civil court suits and sale of church property—elected a single, new general board, which includes an equal number of members from both sides.

"Every year, I was waiting for this reconciliation," said Adi, of the GITJ Kayu Apu congregation in Kudus. "Every time I prayed, I asked God, 'Please, let us communicate again.'

"I knew that I was asking something God wanted. Because as Christians and Christ's body, we are not to be separated. … When we are separated, we cannot become the blessing to the people that we should be."

The meeting was the first general assembly to be held with the entire Javanese church—officially known as the Gereja Injili di Tanah Jawa, or GITJ—since 1989. After sharing Communion, many people estranged for years embraced and shed tears.

With great ceremony during the final session, Adi, one of several men chosen to help lead the assembly, handed the gavel to Pudjo Kartiko, the newly elected chair of the reunited synod and who had been the chair of the Kartini synod, the faction that evolved from the split.

Conflict within the GITJ had been simmering since at least 1978 but came to a head in 1996. Synod leadership had not held regular semiannual delegate assemblies or organized the next general assembly on schedule, sparking many younger members to protest. A large group called a special meeting in 1996 and decided that if synod leadership would not call a general assembly, they would. But when they called a general assembly, the GITJ did as well. The result was two rival assemblies, each with a general board claiming to be the legitimate leadership of the synod, which was organized in 1940.

The Kartini synod became the largest faction, with about two-thirds of the synod congregations siding with it. The Penjawi synod—the original group—was the other faction and the group recognized by the government.

The gavel-handing gesture symbolized the culmination of a reconciliation process that began in 1998. The healing of the divide is a miracle only God could achieve, said Lawrence Yoder, missiologist at Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va.

Yoder and his wife, Shirlee, and Duane Ruth-Heffelbower, director of peace programs for Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in Indonesia, had helped facilitate reconciliation work done by the two sides. Lawrence Yoder and Ruth-Heffelbower attended the Bandungan meeting.

"If I didn't believe I was working together

Crisis leads rivals to become friends

Hendro Soeradi and Pudjo Kartiko resisted having to share a room and cook meals together. But in the end, the rivals learned they can become friends.

In 1999, Mennonite Central Committee sent the two men, leaders of rival factions of a schism in the Javanese Mennonite Church, to Harrisonburg, Va., to attend Eastern Mennonite University's Summer Peacebuilding Institute.

While there, Pudjo learned that his wife had been critically injured in a motorcycle accident. Miles away from home, Pudjo found support in his rival.

"[Hendro] prayed for me, he cried for me, for my family and my wife," he said. "When I first got information about my wife, I felt very sad. And because he felt sad with me, that released many of the feelings of the earlier conflict."

Pudjo's wife has since recovered. And Pudjo last month was elected chair of the reunited synod, with Hendro as first vice chair.

It's a relationship that started in Virginia. "What he felt, I felt," Hendro said. "We learned together."—*Meetinghouse*

Dare to become a global church

Will Mennonite Church USA take its place alongside brothers and sisters in other parts of the world?

In Matthew 28 Jesus sends his disciples with these words: "Go therefore to all nations and make them my disciples." For the early believers, and for the early Anabaptists, it was risky to follow these words. Perhaps that explains why Mennonites in "the south" feel closer to their Anabaptist ancestors who suffered persecution than to their sister churches in North America.

Nevertheless, the church in the north and south agree on a common faith with roots in the Gospel of Christ, and in a sense of a global family. They need each other's support to increase their mission in the world. Their common Anabaptist legacy can inspire unity.

For the church, globalization means learning from each other and teaching the best that we can offer. It means cooperation, accountability to each other, flexibility and humility. It means recognizing that others also have a vision for a global church.

The church in North America often acts like it can survive without other Mennonites. While the church of the north does have more financial resources, churches in the south can make valuable contributions in evangelism and church planting, and offer examples of suffering and witness for peace. The church in the north can offer education, service, economic resources and a systematic approach to church work.

The churches of the south want a relationship with the churches of the north, and they want to be seen as adults in a common faith and mission. The global church is in the world as a witness of the kingdom and its identity is missional.

It is no longer a case of the north simply sending missionaries. People who come to the south as missionaries come into a local congregation that is incarnating the Gospel in its culture. We must share in a common mission and task.

Gilberto Flores is a Guatemalan Mennonite who leads the Hispanic Resource Ministries of GC Mennonites.

Gilberto Flores (right), director of the Anabaptist Biblical Institute, with pastors participating in a continuing education course in Evergreen, Colorado. The Institute trains over 175 students for church leadership each year in North America.

Mennonite
Church
USA

New mission system will equip congregations for mission

Imagine if every Mennonite congregation and all parts of the church were fully engaged in God's mission, "reaching from across the street to around the world."

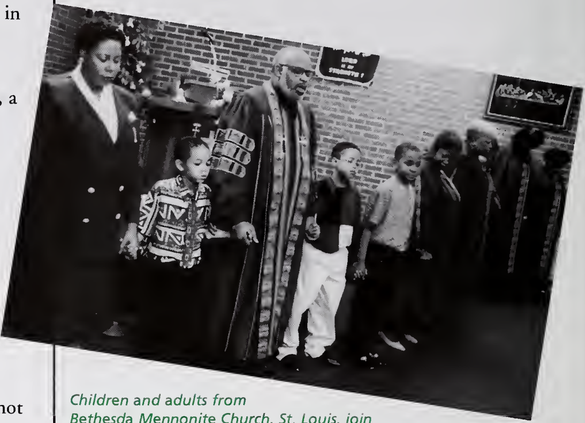
With that vision in mind, the current mission structures serving the General Conference and Mennonite Church in Canada and the United States will undergo a metamorphosis by February 2002. Instead of being the primary initiator of mission supported by congregations, a new mission system will exist primarily to equip and resource congregations in mission. The Mennonite Church, as a denomination, will become a church in mission at every level.

Unanimously the boards and commissions of the Commission on Home Ministries, the Commission on Overseas Mission, Mennonite Board of Missions and the Mennonite Church Canada Ministries Commission adopted that approach in principle Oct. 27 in Excelsior Springs, Mo.

"There is a growing understanding that missions is not just one among many activities of the church. Increasingly, mission is seen as embedded within the very character of the church," according to a report on the vision, strategy and organization of the mission agencies.

The proposed model will for the first time view all levels of the church as part of one mission system, including autonomous regional mission agencies, such as Eastern Mennonite Missions and Virginia Mennonite Board of Missions. New national mission centers in Canada and the USA will play a primary role in developing and articulating vision, creating a national mission strategy and leading the system. At the same time, the centers would develop a virtual system through the Internet to provide resources and foster conversation within the worldwide Anabaptist fellowship.

"There has been a tremendous openness to the moving of God's Spirit among us on this journey," said Kay Nussbaum, chair of the Mission Transformation Steering Committee. "The possibilities around our future are only limited by our imagination."



Children and adults from Bethesda Mennonite Church, St. Louis, join hands during worship. St. Louis area churches and ministries were the recipients of the year 2000 City on a Hill project funds

Pastor Vincente Figueredo Vierra Neto and mission worker Otis Hochstetler baptize a new member of the Conceicao, Brazil congregation at the banks of the Araguaia river

Mennonite Church USA

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Increasing our commitment to Anabaptist Christians worldwide

Have you learned to know Mennonites in Argentina, Ethiopia or Indonesia? Have you, your pastor or your children participated in a college or seminary class where southern hemisphere Mennonites contributed their perspectives on faith and life? Have you been to a Mennonite World Conference assembly? If so, you know why Mennonite World Conference Executive Secretary Larry Miller says: "The future is the global church, as the vital expression of many local and national churches."

This rich interchange of cultures around the throne of Christ is facilitated by Mennonite World Conference (MWC), "the most comprehensive instrument we have for incarnating the global Anabaptist-Mennonite church," continues Miller. MWC exists on an average budget of about $500,000 a year.

The Mennonite Church USA membership accounts for 49% of the wealth of MWC member churches based on membership and national GNP figures. Yet, through our churches we contribute only 12% of the MWC annual operating fund (about $60,000). Some households also contribute directly to MWC.

The new Mennonite Church USA is proposing a commitment to fully fund our share of MWC expenses by giving a first portion of Executive Board income each year. We will do this as an expression of our love, in thankfulness for our material abundance and with high regard for our relationships with Anabaptist Christians around the world.

lenno
Vorld

Ambrocio L. Porcincula of the Philippines leads in prayer during Mennonite World Conference General Council meetings in July in Guatemala City.

Mennonite education institutions: Stepping stones to transformation

"When I do seminars on 'Mennonite higher education: Stumbling block or stepping stone to transformation,' I am invariably stunned to hear how many folks in the pew still think that the schools will be stumbling blocks to transformation. When I talk of all the cooperation that is happening, how smoothly the Education Integration Committee deliberations have gone, their eyes light up."

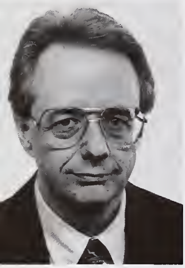
This testimony from Dale Schrag, secretary for the Higher Education Council and—with Orville Yoder of the Mennonite Board of Education—staff for the Education Integration Committee, captures an aspect of transformation that has not received much public attention. Ironically, in September 2000, the Mennonite education agency became the first program entity approved by the Executive Board for delegate consideration in Nashville.

In the meantime—through the Gideon Education Projects Committee for the colleges, the Theological Education Committee for the seminaries and the elementary and secondary councils—Mennonite schools are demonstrating their willingness *and enthusiasm* for working together to strengthen the life, witness and identity of the Mennonite Church USA through school-based education.

(from the Mennonite education agency proposal, Sept. 2000)
Purposes of the emerging Mennonite education agency include:

- *Advocacy*
- Developing and maintaining the *vision*
- *Discern* educational needs
- *Dismantling racism*
- Emphasizing *the common good* over institutional self-interests
- Facilitating *collaboration*
- Providing *services*
- Maintaining *accountability* relationships

Collaborating will strengthen our witness



In the past year I have visited almost all of the 22 conferences of Mennonite Church USA. I am impressed with each one's individuality. But more than this, I am in awe of their similarities.

Take Pacific Southwest and Franklin conferences as examples. Differences? Yes, many. One is part of the historic east, the other of the burgeoning west. Because of different histories and locations, each naturally marches to a different cultural drummer. Perhaps there are some theological differences as well.

But these two conferences share a love of evangelism, of reaching out to win others for Christ. Each may pursue this calling in different ways, but their motivation appears strikingly similar.

I wonder what would happen if these two conferences decided to collaborate with each other in their love of evangelism? How would this new alliance bear fruit for the Gospel? Could our new church find renewed energy for evangelism from the synergy of these two conferences?

We are on the threshold of many new alliances of this kind. Our expanded relationships in the church will strengthen, not diminish, each other, if our common ground of purpose in the Gospel is affirmed.

Pray that as we "find each other" we will discover the surprises of God anew. God's refreshing waters of salvation are raining upon us, and through us, to those around us.

Jim Schrag
Transformation Project Director and
Executive Director designate
Mennonite Church USA

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Colossians 3:12-17

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"Above all,

clothe yourselves with

love, which binds

everything together in

perfect harmony,"

Colossians 3:14

(excerpted from the Nashville 2001 scripture theme)

What are your hopes and dreams for Nashville?

As you and your congregation make plans and budget for attending Nashville 2001, what are your hopes and dreams for this historic gathering? Some members of the General Conference and Mennonite Church executive staff recently shared their own dreams for the upcoming assembly in July 2001:

- "I hope people will catch a vision for a new mission agency with a new enthusiasm and understanding of the church in mission."
- "I hope delegates will come away with an excitement for a new way of how we can be church together."
- "I hope we'll celebrate and that we'll have a deep sense of God's presence and an awareness of God at work."
- "I hope our sons and daughters will experience a church they want to be a part of, and that they'll be energized to pick up the reins of church leadership."
- "I dream that we can accomplish the work of the church in a mode that feels closer to consensus than that we're taking a vote."
- "I hope we experience a church different from anything we've ever experienced before."

Plan now to attend the Mennonite Church USA assembly in Nashville, July 2-7, 2001. Registration materials will be mailed to your congregation by the end of December. Join the celebration!

Mennonite
Church
USA

with God in this, forget it," Yoder said. "I think they [the factions] were very, very stuck ... and God needed to catalyze some things.

"They had tried for so long to manufacture their own solution, and nothing worked. They needed to be reminded that God was at work, and because of that, they could do the impossible."

Despite tensions within leadership, many congregations wanted unity. They had sought the mediation of others, such as the two other Mennonite synods in Indonesia—Gereja Kristen Muria Indonesia, or GKMI, and Jemaat Kristen Indonesia, or JKI—and the Indonesian Council of Churches. But no results occurred.

In another try at resolving some of the issues, the Yoders, former MCC workers in Indonesia, drew together GITJ leaders for a retreat in mid-1998. MCC and the Java Committee of the Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit (the Dutch Mennonite conference) supported the meeting. Dutch missionaries helped plant some of the first GITJ churches.

In July 1998 the two rival general boards met and formed a joint team to work on a reunification process. This past June, the Yoders invited the boards to meet again. Participants identified needs and developed plans for reconciliation.

The Yoders drew on resources for this meeting from Ruth-Heffelbower, a conflict transformation specialist who teaches peacemaking at Duta Wacana Christian University in Yogyakarta. In August, Ruth-Heffelbower, with a peacemaking team from the university, facilitated a reconciliation meeting with representatives of all 89 congregations.

The Holy Spirit melted hearts in a surprising outpouring of emotion, Ruth-Heffelbower said. The participants could barely sing during worship because of their weeping—unusual for the Javanese, who are often more reserved. "It was clear to me that they were ready to create a situation where the Holy Spirit was able to move among them," Ruth-Heffelbower said.

In many ways, the reunited synod's work is just beginning. For example, it must decide what to do about assets lost by the sale of synod properties, whether it should reopen its seminary and how to restore trust.

But synod leaders and pastors said they believe they can do more together than alone. They agree that restored community is of far more value than lost assets.

"We need each other, because we can't solve these problems by ourselves," said Hendro Soeradi, the newly elected first vice chair of the reunited synod and former first vice chair of the Penjawi synod. "Like it says [in Scripture], a cord of three strands is not easily broken."—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse with MWC News Service*

Editor's note: For most Indonesians, the first name is most important. When a second name is used, it is not a family name or surname. Some Indonesians use only one name. Hence a variety of styles are used to refer to the people in these stories.

Schism brought personal loss to worker

BANDUNGAN, Indonesia—During the four-year split in the Javanese Mennonite Church, the synod lost property. Members lost trust. And Kamanun lost his wife.

Because of the division and subsequent financial difficulties, Kamanun, a synod clerical worker since 1966, did not receive full pay for months and could not afford to buy insulin for his diabetic wife. As a result, she grew sick and died two years ago at the age of 47.

Kamanun said he lost the love of his life. But he had not lost his love for God and for God's people, no matter how great his own suffering that had resulted from some of their actions.

"I certainly had many difficulties and much suffering during this time, but all of it was in the Lord's hands," he said with tears pouring down his face. "But my suffering is nothing at all compared to the suffering of Jesus."

As he cried, the slight Javanese man sat in silence next to Lawrence Yoder. Kamanun seemed to gain comfort from Yoder, a missiologist from Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va., who had helped to heal the synod rift.

"He paid a price nobody else paid," Yoder said. "All the other people paid, yes, but not in the kind of daily realities he faced."

But Kamanun did not speak a bitter word against anyone; instead he urged the new, reunited synod to continue as one.

After the split in 1996, Kamanun remained in the office of the faction called the Penjawi synod. "I worked for 34 years as a clerical worker and staff for the executive board of the synod and have been there to experience all the difficulties and challenges that have come along," he said. "But I didn't want to look at the schism when it came. I continued to consider all of the 89 churches as my churches.

"What I have to say is a plea and a hope that ... we will have a good and restored relationship with all the churches and with friends and partners overseas."

The God Kamanun so deeply trusts seems to have blessed him personally. On the weekend after the November reunification meeting, he planned to marry a new bride from Semarang.—*Laurie L. Oswald for Meetinghouse*

My suffering is nothing at all compared to the suffering of Jesus.

—*Kamanun*

Planned execution spurs church action

Federal death penalty case reaches Mennonite circles

TERRE HAUTE, Ind.—The planned Dec. 12 execution of a federal convict with Mennonite connections is creating a flurry of activity from within and outside church circles.

Juan Raul Garza, imprisoned in Terre Haute, is scheduled to become the first federal prisoner to be executed in 37 years. He was sentenced to death in 1993 for three drug-related murders. He had been scheduled to be executed on Aug. 5 but was granted a reprieve by President Clinton because of concerns about racial and geographic disparities in the application of the death penalty.

Garza is the ex-husband of Elizabeth Garza, who attends Iglesia Menonita del Cordero in Brownsville, Texas, a Mennonite congregation formerly pastored by Elizabeth's father, Conrado Hinojosa. Hinojosa has held denominational-level positions, including membership on the former Mennonite Church General Board, and is Mennonite Board of Missions' (MBM) urban ministry director in south Texas.

MBM is soliciting contributions to help cover expenses for Elizabeth and their four children to travel to Terre Haute.

Mennonite Central Committee staff are calling for clemency for Garza. "My prayer is that God's will be done, I pray for peace and strength for the Hinojosas and Garzas," wrote Anita Barahona, peace and justice educator/advocate for MCC Great Lakes, in a letter circulated to supporters.

In a letter to Clinton calling for clemency for Garza and a moratorium on all federal executions, Mennonite Church USA general secretary George Stoltzfus quoted the Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective: "Led by the Spirit, and beginning in the church, we witness to all people that violence is not the will of God. We witness against all forms of violence, including … capital punishment."

Opposition to Garza's execution is also coming from a variety of quarters. A letter to Clinton from the newly formed Citizens for a Moratorium on Federal Executions was signed by 40 people, including Jesse Jackson; former U.S. senators Alan Cranston, Thomas Eagleton and Paul Simon; Nobel Peace Prize winner and author Elie Wiesel; Lloyd Culter, Clinton's former White House counsel; actress and singer Barbra Streisand; and Joseph Fiorenza, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Former President Jimmy Carter and his wife, Rosalyn, sent a separate letter in support of a moratorium.—*Rich Preheim*

Missions in the hole for Indiana golfers

Two members of Waterford Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind., are wielding clubs to raise money for missions.

Eldon Heatwole and Maurice Lehman have dubbed a local golf course's 10th green as the "Stanley Green" in honor of Mennonite Board of Missions' president. Every time he shoots par on the hole, Heatwole intends to contribute $100 to the New Century of Mission campaign.

Lehman is keeping track of his scores on the entire course, contributing $2 when he pars a hole and $5 when he birdies.

New Century of Mission celebrates 100 years of General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church mission work, raising funds for continuing efforts in the new denomination.
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MCC program helps Lebanese children use art to depict trauma

QAQAYEH, Lebanon—For much of their short lives, Fatima Audi and Manal Hallowy have lived in the midst of violence.

For 22 years their village of Qaqayeh was on the edge of the Israeli security zone in south Lebanon. As a result, the village suffered from almost daily bombardments and severely restricted activities. When the Israelis withdrew from south Lebanon at the end of May, the pain caused by the occupation did not immediately dissipate.

So when Audi, 12, and Hallowy, 11, were given a chance to express themselves through art this summer, they drew pictures that showed their pain and suffering. Their artistic renderings were part of a summer education program established by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) in the public school in Qaqayeh, as well as in four other villages.

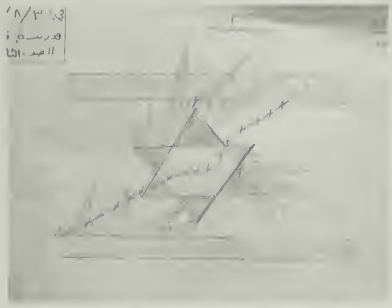
"Audi's picture of a wolf licking its lips above a lamb suggests she has lived as an oppressed person," says Randal Nickel, MCC Lebanon country co-representative. He says Hallowy drew depictions of the two things that caused her the most pain: the flag of Israel and an electrical wire that accidentally killed her father.

MCC started the summer education program in 1996 to stand alongside the people of south Lebanon. With the help of the Lebanese Ministry of Education, students participate in a six-week course in summer to improve their skills and experience a style of education that promotes active learning and fun. The primary objective of the program is to give the students a new relationship to learning, their teachers and the school. "By focusing on education in a government school, we are reaching a large group of people with very limited economic means," Nickel says.

During the Israeli occupation, schools in this volatile area were frequently closed because of heavy artillery fire. "They had bomb days off from school instead of snow days," Nickel says. "There are bullet holes in the walls of some of the schools."

During the drawing activity, the students were encouraged to express their thoughts about anything they wanted. Most of the drawings related in some way to the Israeli occupation. Still, there is hope in the village for healing.

"The people will not forget," says Hussein Hallowy, a supervising teacher. "The memories are in the back of their minds, but they go on." *—MCC News Service*



Eleven-year-old Manal Hallowy, a Lebanese student in a Mennonite Central Committee-sponsored education program, drew this picture of two things that caused her the most pain: a flag depicting Israel and an electric wire, which accidentally killed her father.

MCC photo by Randal Nickel

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Urban leaders meet

Augsburger

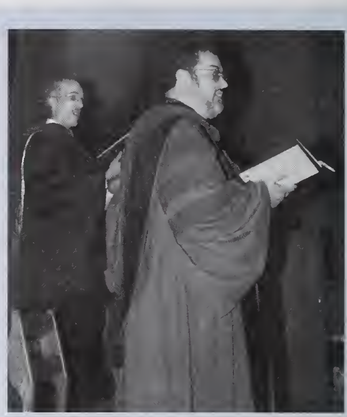
NEW YORK CITY—Saying that his life has been revolutionized through interaction with people in the city, prominent Mennonite leader Myron S. Augsburger calls the Mennonite Church to feel the pulse of the inner city and take its context seriously in order to invite others to faith in Jesus Christ.

"The kind of church I'm interested in, in the inner city, has to … major more on diversity," Augsburger told nearly 50 people Nov. 14 at the annual Mennonite Urban Leaders Network gathering, sponsored by Mennonite Board of Missions. "We have to be more understanding of the variety and less defensive. The main problem I find among most pastors is that we are too controlling."

Augsburger is former president of Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va., and founder of Washington Community Fellowship on Capitol Hill. "You can't sit over in Harrisonburg at Eastern Mennonite Seminary and learn some of the things I've talked about," he said. "You have to be exposed to them.

"You cannot be a good Anabaptist and not be evangelistic. We Mennonites need to be a little more clear about what the gospel is."

The gathering was held at First Presbyterian Church in Queens, a facility also used by a Mennonite congregation, Immanuel Community Church.—*Tom Price of MBM News Service*



Mary E. Klassen

Time of installation

Nelson Kraybill (left), president of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., leads the Nov. 12 installation service for new AMBS dean Loren L. Johns (right). "When we seek to speak God's word, we need to listen," Johns said in his message, cautioning that "we are too quick to presume to speak on God's behalf." Johns, who began his position this summer, previously was associate professor of religion at Bluffton (Ohio) College. He is a graduate of Goshen (Ind.) College, AMBS and Princeton Theological Seminary.

class of 2000

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more than the answers
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she finds her questions **changing**
with all she's achieved
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Global history writers meet for first time

FREDESHIEM, Netherlands—Writers from five countries gathered Oct. 25-Nov. 2 at Fredeshiem for the first gathering of Mennonite World Conference's Global Mennonite History Project.

The project will produce books on Mennonite history from each region of the world. The Fredeshiem meeting was designed to introduce participants to each other and to develop a common approach for the themes of each volume.

"This meeting for me is the first step in the really incredible journey … for my writing the history of Mennonite churches in Indonesia," said Adhi Dharma of Indonesia. "Our task is as holy for our time as it was for those who recorded that which is preserved in the Scriptures."

In addition to Indonesia, writers came from Congo, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, India and Zimbabwe. Writers from Japan and Taiwan were unable to attend.

All writers reported on their work. Jaime Prieto of Costa Rica, who is furthest along in the project, told of his understandings of the Latin American Mennonite story. Participants also heard presentations on topics such as the global Mennonite church, the editorial process and oral history.

The Africa and Latin America volumes are scheduled to be released in 2003, with the Asia volume coming in 2004 and Europe and North America in 2005. Each volume will be illustrated and about 300 pages long plus an appendix and index.

The Fredeshiem meeting was funded by the Dutch Mennonite conference, Algemene Doopsgezinde Societeit. The Global History Project writers will meet again next year on the campus of Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Ind.

The project, a program of Mennonite World Conference, is funded in part by Mennonite Central Committee, Mennonite Mutual Aid, Mennonite Foundation Canada, Goodville Insurance and a number of Mennonite historical societies.—*MWC News Service*

Correction: Mennonite Central Committee has spent $9,000 on post-Hurricane Mitch projects in San Martin, El Salvador. The figure was incorrect in the Oct. 31 issue.

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MCC letter opposes cluster bombs

AKRON, Pa.—Mennonite Central Committee is collecting signatures for a letter calling for a moratorium on cluster bombs. MCC staff plan to present the letter at the United Nations-sponsored Convention on Conventional Weapons, to be held Dec. 11-13 in Geneva.

"MCC and Mennonite constituents have been working for years at the problems of clearing unexploded cluster bombs in Laos," says Titus Peachey, MCC U.S. peace education director. "Prevention of these kinds of tragedies in other places is the other half of our concern."

Peachey and Virgil Wiebe, a lawyer at the Georgetown University Center for Applied Legal Studies, will attend the conference, where government delegates will discuss revisions to laws dealing with landmines. Nongovernmental organizations such as MCC are not part of the official proceedings, but they often hold a "shadow conference" with their own workshops and presentations.—*MCC News Service*

Fiscal year second best in Bethel history

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Bethel College recorded its second highest year for giving during the 1999-2000 fiscal year. Contributions totaled $5.98 million, president Douglas Penner announced at the annual President's Club banquet Nov. 11 at the North Newton school.

The past fiscal year was also the best for the President's Club, the donor group of those who give more than $1,000 to Bethel during a year. The number of President's Club members increased from 526 to 572. Members contributed 93.3 percent of funds donated to Bethel.

Goshen runner is first woman All-American

GOSHEN, Ind.—Goshen College freshman Heidi Saunders became the first woman athlete in school history to earn All-American honors when she placed 28th at the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics national cross-country meet Nov. 18. The NAIA recognized the top 30 finishers as All-Americans.

Saunders, from Plainwell, Mich., finished the meet with a time of 19:00. The meet was held at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside.

Earlier this year, Saunders broke Goshen's 15-year-old cross-country record when she finished first at the Goshen Invitational with a time of 18:46.

by the way ...

More than 100 Mennonites are in Mexican prisons on drug-dealing charges.
—*EMMC Recorder*

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Events

Eastern Mennonite Seminary School for Leadership Training, Jan. 22-25, 2001, Harrisonburg, Va. For information, call 540-432-4597; email <swartlej@emu.edu>; web <www.emu.edu/sem/slt.html>.

Pacific Southwest Conference midyear assembly, Feb. 2-3, 2001, Phoenix.

Workers

Charles, Laura, Goshen, Ind., has begun a one-year Mennonite Urban Corps (MennoCorps) term with the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation and the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre.

Deckert, Eric, will conclude a pastorate at Turpin (Okla.) Mennonite Church and will become pastor of Wellman (Iowa) Mennonite Church in early February 2001.

Dunn, Anna, Kidron, Ohio, has begun a one-year MennoCorps term in Pittsburgh at Goodwill Literacy Initiative and the Allegheny County Jail.

Fahnestock, Lisa, Stevens, Pa., in November completed a one-year Eastern Mennonite Missions (EMM) term as an administrative assistant at Nazareth (Israel) Hospital.

Gaff, Clarissa, Rolling Prairie, Ind., has begun a one-year MennoCorps term in Pittsburgh at Clean Water Action and the Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Shop Workers.

Hochstedler, Jodi, Kalona, Iowa, has begun a one-year MennoCorps term at Pittsburgh Mennonite Church and the Pittsburgh Mediation Center.

Schrag, LaVerle, was ordained Nov. 5 as associate pastor at First Mennonite Church, Hutchinson, Kan.

Schumann, Joy, Lima, Ohio, has begun a one-year MennoCorps term in Pittsburgh at East End Cooperative Ministries.

Shank, Justin, Goshen, Ind., has begun a one-year MennoCorps term in Pittsburgh at I Design furniture studio.

Shull, Jeff, has completed a pastorate at Eden Mennonite Church, Inola, Okla.

Smeenge, Dan and Melike, West Palm Beach, Fla., have returned due to medical reasons from two years with EMM in Albania.

Troyer, Heather, North Newton, Kan., has begun a one-year MennoCorps term at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and in production for *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*.

Wenger, Mark, Waynesboro, Va., has been named associate director of the Preaching Institute at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va. He continues as co-pastor of Springdale Mennonite Church, Waynesboro.

Wolgemuth, Dale and Lois, Manheim, Pa., have returned due to medical reasons from three years with EMM in Guatemala.

Yoder, Kari, Akron, Pa., has begun a one-year MennoCorps term at Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

Births

Bergey, Jonathan Luke, Nov. 18, to Gloria (Knechel) and Lowell Bergey, Hatfield, Pa.

Bontrager, Emma Yoder, Nov. 1, to Cynthia (Yoder) and Gordon Bontrager, Elkhart, Ind.

Cripe, Jason Larry, Oct. 30, to Loren and Sheila (Wisler) Cripe, Wakarusa, Ind.

Dugan, David Paul, Oct. 9, to David and Mary (Jantzi) Dugan, Buffalo, N.Y.

Eicher, Benjamin John, Nov. 6, to Allan and Elizabeth (Wappenstein) Eicher, Leo, Ind.

Gascho, Bryce Michael, Oct. 13, 2000, received for adoption Oct. 15, 2000, by Scott Gascho and Alice McNulty, Canby, Ore.

Hershberger, Wesley David, Oct. 18, to Melika (Kauffman) and Ross Hershberger, Cooksville, Ill.

Lauterbach, Benjamin Reid, Oct. 25, to Donna (Duckworth) and Douglas Lauterbach, Hickory, N.C.

Leichty, Grant Edward, Oct. 22, to Kerry and Rebecca (Plank) Leichty, Harrisonburg, Va.

Maidens, Grace Elizabeth, Nov. 3, to Julie (Byler) and Paul Maidens, Mill Creek, Pa.

McKee, Elizabeth Jean, Oct. 3, to Edward and Stephani (Epp) McKee, Lincoln, Neb.

Miller, Samuel Lee, Nov. 9, to James and Norma (Byler) Miller, Hartville, Ohio.

Nachtigal, Bailey Andrew, Oct. 2, to Gina and Steve Nachtigal, Hutchinson, Kan.

Pearce, April and Beth (twins), Nov. 12 to Brian and Dorothy (Shetler) Pearce, Smithville, Ohio.

Penner, Mara Elizabeth, Oct. 19, to Paige (Foust) and Tom Penner, Racine, Wis.

Ponce, Isaac Antonio, Oct. 17, to Armando and Deborah (Saylor) Ponce, Shipshewana, Ind.

Regehr, Bethany Grace, Oct. 9, to Curtiss and Tammy (Singer) Regehr, Whitewater, Kan.

Roth, Emma Lea, Oct. 29, to Amber (Neuschwander) and Scott Roth, Albany, Ore.

Ruth, Melea Shae, Dec. 10, 1999, received for adoption Nov. 4, 2000, by Rhonda (Souder) and Ron Ruth, Telford, Pa.

Schmidt, Matthew, Nov. 3, to Carla (Blain) and Mark Schmidt, Overland Park, Kan.

Sheppard, Rachel Maretta, Nov. 4, to Tammy (Peachey) and Wayne Sheppard, Williamsport, Pa.

Shrock, Justin Daniel, Oct. 14, to Alvie and Sheila (Kropf) Schrock, Brownsville, Ore.

Stauffer, Mitchell Andre, Oct. 10, to Dena (Yoder) and Kurt Stauffer, Belleville, Pa.

Stutzman, Anthony Blake, Oct. 29, to Larry and Lisa (Miller) Stutzman, Dalton, Ohio.

Teach, Sidney Skylar, Nov. 5, to Kristin (Kalina) and Matt Teach, Wooster, Ohio.

Windham, Anna Claire, Nov. 7, to David and Joni (Yoder) Windham, Hartville, Ohio.

Yoder, Abigail Faith, Nov. 14, to Doug and Jennifer (Knight) Yoder, Wauseon, Ohio.

Marriages

Allender/Janzen: Wendy Allender, Milton, Kan., and Jay Dee Janzen, Henderson, Neb., Nov. 4 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Allison/Magliocca: Ruth Ann Allison, Somerset, Pa., and Seth Magliocca, Somerset, Nov. 11 at Thomas Mennonite Church, Holsopple, Pa.

Birk/Jesse: Steve Birk, Nappanee, Ind., and Jaclyn Jesse, Elkhart, Ind., Nov. 4 at Trinity Evangelical Free Church, South Bend, Ind.

Brooks/Lebien: Ron Brooks, Hutchinson, Kan., and Shirley Lebien, Hutchinson, Oct. 29 at South Hutchinson Mennonite Church.

Burford/Vardaman: Janet Burford, Goshen, Ind., and Jeffrey Vardaman, Shipshewana, Ind., Nov. 4 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Callan/Shaub: Gene Callan, Media, Pa., and Laurie Shaub, Upper Darby, Pa., Nov. 4 at London Grove Meeting House, Kennett Square, Pa.

Cooper/Lengyell: Lance Cooper, Waterloo, Ont., and Raylene Bowman Lengyell, Waterloo, Oct. 21 at Kitchener, Ont.

Detweiler/Miller: Ann Detweiler, Goshen, Ind., and Dwight Miller, Goshen, Sept. 23 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Hoeger/Lehman: Emily Hoeger, Key West, Iowa, and Timothy Lehman, Dalton, Ohio, Oct. 14 at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Key West.

Kooker/Shumac: Julie Kooker, Souderton, Pa., and Jeff Shumac, Altoona, Pa., Oct. 7 at Covenant Community Fellowship, Lansdale, Pa.

Miller/Pasqualone: Yvonne Miller, Nappanee, Ind., and Keith Pasqualone, Elkhart, Ind., Oct. 21 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Nikkel/Widmer: Nathan Nikkel, Pella, Iowa, and Nicole Widmer, Washington, Iowa, Oct. 7 at Crooked Creek Christian Camp, Washington.

Roth/Swope: Matthew Roth, West Liberty, Ohio, and Miriam Swope, Leetonia, Ohio, Nov. 11 at Midway Mennonite Church, Columbiana, Ohio.

The perfect gift!

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Sauder/Witmer: Kevin Sauder, Lancaster, Pa., and Dawn Witmer, Elizabethtown, Pa., Nov. 11 at Landisville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Schultz/Stieglitz: Ronald Schultz, Monroeville, Ind., and Carla Stieglitz, Fort Wayne, Ind., Oct. 28 at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne.

Wolfgang/Zelaya: Andrea Wolfgang, Sellersville, Pa., and Rolando Zelaya, Honduras, Oct. 15 at Amor Viviente Church, Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

Deaths

Andersen, Peter Laurids, 75, Florence, Ariz., died Nov. 1 of a stroke. Spouse: Emma Jane Hunsberger Andersen. Other survivors: children Peter Jr., Thomas; one grandchild. Memorial service: Nov. 5 at Koinonia Mennonite Church, Chandler, Ariz.

Baker, Barbara Jean Gabris, 54, Wichita, Kan., died Nov. 6 of cancer. Spouse: Larry Baker. Parents: Joseph and Catherine Schnarr Gabris (deceased). Other survivors: children Whitney, Julie Dunkelberger. Memorial service: Nov. 9 at Hope Mennonite Church, Wichita.

Balzer, Louise Schroeder, 84, North Newton, Kan., died Oct. 22. Spouse: Arthur Balzer. Other survivors: daughter Ann Doerksen; two grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 26 at Grace Hill Mennonite, Whitewater, Kan.

Bauman, Ruth Culp, 90, Nappanee, Ind., died Sept. 22. Spouse: Noah Bauman (deceased). Parents: Oliver and Lottie Culp (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Leland; four grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Sept. 25 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Dirks, Brinton Marlo, 80, Newton, Kan., died Oct. 10 of cancer of the esophagus. Spouse: Ruth Ann Brubacher Dirks. Parents: Brinton and Blanche Kaegi Dirks (deceased). Other survivors: children John, Richard; two grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct 12 at Bethel College Mennonite Church, North Newton, Kan.

Hertig, Mabel Kauffman, 79, Wayland, Iowa, died Oct. 30. Spouse: Dillon Hertig. Parents: Johnnie and Hazel Manning Kauffman (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Betty Lou Miles; two grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 2 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Hochstetler, Gladys, 76, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 4. Parents: Levi and Ruth Hochstetler (deceased). Survivor: son Otis Hochstetler. Funeral: Oct. 7 at Goshen.

Hooley, Edna Mullis, 85, Moses Lake, Wash., died Oct. 31. Spouse: John Hooley (deceased). Parents: Ennis and Millie Smith Mullis (deceased). Survivors: children Mary Hukkanen, Kathy Curt, Eldon, Ken, John; 19 grandchildren; 37 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 3 at Warden (Wash.) Mennonite Church.

King, Samuel, 85, Belleville, Pa., died Oct. 16 of heart problems. Spouse: Mary Zook King. Parents: Joseph and Salina King (deceased). Other survivors: children Jesse, David, Ivan, Leah Harbst, Gary; nine grandchildren; 17 great-grandchildren; three great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 19 at Maple Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville.

Lehman, Mildred, 85, Goshen, Ind., died Sept. 24. Parents: Charles and Bertha Lehman (deceased). Funeral: Sept. 27 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Lichti, Laura Bender, 79, New Hamburg, Ont., died Oct. 24. Spouse: Willis Lichti. Other survivors: children June, William; six grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Oct. 28 at East Zorra Mennonite Church, Tavistock, Ont.

Martin, Melinda, 89, Listowel, Ont., died Nov. 2. Parents: Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Martin (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 6 at St. Jacobs (Ont.) Mennonite Church.

Moyer, Kathryn Hendricks, 84, Harleysville, Pa., died Nov. 13. Spouse: Richard Moyer (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Katie Wasser Hendricks (deceased). Survivors: children Ronald, Carol Miller, Shirley Fox, Nancy Histand; 14 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 18 at Peter Becker Community Chapel, Harleysville.

Ramer, Lewis, 76, Goshen, Ind., died Oct. 24 from a car accident. Spouse: Margaret Ramer (deceased). Parents: John and Golda Ramer (deceased). Survivors: children Gary, Max, Brenda Weatherton; eight grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 28 at Yellow Creek Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Rempel, George, 85, Steinbach, Man., died Nov. 1. Spouse: Katherine Rempel. Other survivors: children Eleanore Wollard, Eric, Irma Peters, Ron, Judith Rempel Smucker; 10 grandchildren; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 4.

Reschly, Justin, 20, Wayland, Iowa, died Sept. 25 of cardiac arrhythmia. Parents: Mick and Ranee Grieser Reschly. Funeral: Sept. 28 at Wayland.

Shellenberger, Ruth, 77, Manheim, Pa., died Oct. 30. Spouse: Marlin Shellenberger. Other survivors: children Marlin, Larry, Jay, Lois Martin, Fay Huber; 10 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 3 at Erisman Mennonite Church, Manheim.

Shoup, Brenda, 38, Orrville, Ohio, died Sept. 19. Parents: Arthur and Miriam Shoup. Funeral: Sept. 22 at Crown Hill Mennonite Church, Rittman, Ohio.

Yoder, Allen, 69, Allensville, Pa., died Nov. 4. Spouse: Anna Peachey Yoder. Parents: Jacob and Saloma Peachey Yoder (deceased). Other survivors: children Susan Newcomer, Jay, Arlene Byler, Beth Finkbiner; 10 grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 8 at Locust Grove Mennonite Church, Belleville, Pa.

Associate Dean for Leadership Education

AMBS is seeking a full-time Associate Dean for Leadership Education to coordinate continuing education for pastors and laypeople, coordinate Conference-based Theological Education programs, direct the Pastoral Studies Distance Education program, and assist the dean. Qualifications include an advanced degree in adult education or ministries or willingness to pursue such a degree; strong communication and administrative skills; knowledge of online and distance education technologies; and knowledge of and commitment to Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA. AMBS is an equal opportunity employer. See **www.ambs.edu/jobpostings.htm**.

Send curriculum vitae, three references, and letter indicating interest to Dr. Loren L. Johns, Academic Dean, AMBS, 3003 Benham Avenue, Elkhart, IN 46517-1999, ljohns@ambs.edu.

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- **Roots & Wings Community School** seeks married couple to work as ***foster parents and math/science teacher(s)*** at farm and wilderness-based new charter public school on 700 acres near Taos, N.M. 505-737-5826

- **Rosslyn Academy**, a Christian international day school in Nairobi, Kenya, seeks applicants for the 2001-02 school year. Teaching positions are open at ***elementary, middle and high school levels*** and other openings include ***guidance counselor, administrator and computer specialist***.

  Email Jim Leaman, Superintendent, <JimL@Rosslyn.iconnect.co.ke>, or airmail resume to P.O. Box 14146, Nairobi, Kenya.

- **Camp Mennoscah** seeks ***administrative directors***: One full-time and one part-time position open Jan. 1, 2001, at the Western District Conference (WDC) camp in south central Kansas. Ability to coordinate and supervise volunteers necessary. Housing provided.

  Phone the WDC office, 316-283-6300; or email <wdc@mennowdc.org>, or write to the WDC at P.O. Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117.

- **All God's Children**, a history of ***100 years of planting churches*** and witnessing for God in Philadelphia, by Eastern Mennonite Missions; published in 2000 by the Philadelphia District of the Mennonite Church. Writers: Jeff Gingerich and Miriam Stoltzfus. $14.95/$1.50 postage. 82 pages and over 100 pictures. An excellent Christmas gift.

  Order from Miriam Stoltzfus, 2063 Hill Rd., Perkiomenville, PA 18074.

- **Africa knowledge, experience and vision?** Administrative expertise? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for an ***Africa co-director*** to share administrative oversight for MCC work and witness in Africa, starting spring 2001. MCC has programs and about 200 staff in 19 African countries, with a 1999 total budget of $4.6 million.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, email <cdb@mcc.org>, if you are interested in this leadership position. Application review begins Dec. 1, 2000.

- **Commitment to voluntary service?** Experience in administration, counseling and voluntary service unit life? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for a ***coordinator for Lancaster County Service Program***, which includes 30+ volunteers from Canada, Brazil, Germany, United States, Switzerland and South Africa who work at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, email <cdb@mcc.org>, for more information about this full-time leadership position that opens June 1, 2001. Application review begins Jan. 1, 2001.

- **Conestoga Christian School**, a K-12 school accredited by Association of Christian Schools International and Middle States Association and accountable to local churches, seeks a ***chief administrator*** committed to Jesus Christ and Christian education. Teaching and administrative experience preferred. School located in eastern Lancaster County, 50 miles west of Philadelphia. Position available spring/summer 2001.

  Send resume to Search Committee, 2760 Main St., Morgantown, PA 19543; fax 610-286-0350.

- **Manheim Christian Day School** has an opening for a full-time ***middle school teacher*** beginning Jan. 18, 2001. A bachelor's degree in education is required. This teacher would teach social studies, Bible and Spanish. Experience with middle school students is preferred.

  Send a letter of application, resume and LACMS application to MCDS, attn. Crist Peachey, Administrator, 686 Lebanon Rd., Manheim, PA 17545; 717-665-4300. MCDS is a member of the Mennonite Elementary Education Association and Lancaster Area Council of Mennonite Schools.

- **Bluffton College** economics and business administration department invites applications for a tenure track position in ***accounting*** beginning fall 2001. Appointment at assistant or associate level. Master's degree required. CPA and teaching experience preferred. CPA or equivalent required for tenure. Teaching load includes undergraduate courses in Elements of Accounting and Intermediate Accounting, Income Tax Accounting, Auditing, Cost Accounting and Government and Nonprofit Accounting. For more information, see <www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/employment.htm>. Review of applications will begin Jan. 15, 2001, and continue until the position is filled.

  Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Freeman Academy**, Freeman, S.D., grades 5-12, seeks full-time ***admissions recruiter***. Base pay $15,000 plus $500 per student. Contact 605-925-4237; fax 605-925-4271.

- **Prince of Peace Mennonite Church**, Anchorage, Alaska, small family-oriented church founded on Anabaptist teachings, seeks part-time ***pastoral leadership***. Inquiries to Rosetta Landis, 907-337-5813; email <goldpan@alaska.net>. Information available upon request.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is seeking a ***fraternal adviser for Ohio and west Pennsylvania*** to serve as a regional resource person and communication link with congregations, assisting them in using MMA's fraternal programs and accessing other MMA services. Qualified candidates will have strong leadership skills, ability to motivate others, good communication and public speaking skills, an understanding of local church structures and a willingness to travel. MMA offers competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Send or fax letter of interest and resume to MMA, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264; email <hr@mma-online.org>.

- **Western Mennonite School**, Salem, Ore., is seeking qualified staff who have energy and passion for nurturing and educating today's youth in a Christ-centered education setting. Seeking ***director of alumni relations and communications***: Cultivate relationships with alumni through campus events and alumni projects, support advancement activities, coordinate all forms of communication for Western including publications, advertising and external media. Excellent communication skills with a strong interest in marketing and public relations are required.

  Contact Darrel White, 503-363-2000; email <wmswhite@teleport.com>.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is looking for a ***director for the Stewardship Education Center*** to lead MMA's stewardship education efforts in the Anabaptist constituency. Qualifications needed include strong leadership and relational skills with the ability to motivate others, proven management skills, ability to visualize new programs, good communication and public speaking skills, college degree with a master's in Christian ministry preferred. MMA offers competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Send or fax letter of interest and resume to MMA, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264; email <hr@mma-online.org>.

- **Lititz Area Mennonite School** is currently taking applications for a ***school administrator*** for the school year beginning August 2001. We are looking for a candidate with a master's in education or administration, and 5 years teaching experience. LAMS provides a K-8 Christ-centered education within an Anabaptist framework to Christian families in its geographical area. With an enrollment of 240, we are located in a semi-rural section of Lancaster County, Pa.

  If you are interested in this position, please send your application to Board Chairman, Lititz Area Mennonite School, 1050 E. Newport Rd., Lititz, PA 17543.

- **Mount Joy Mennonite Church** seeks candidates to fill two or more positions which together will cover four areas of responsibility: ***youth, outreach, pastoral care and Christian education***. There is flexibility in how the positions are configured, offering options of part-time or full-time, if combining several areas of giftedness. When applying, please note the area(s) of responsibility of interest to you and your availability for full-time and/or part-time.

  Mail resumes, in confidence, to Allen Heinly, 929 Wood St., Mount Joy, PA 17552, or contact Joe Sherer at 717-653-1528; email <joesherer@paonline.com>.

- **Bluffton College** seeks candidates for a tenure track position in ***early childhood education*** beginning fall semester 2001. Doctorate (or ABD) with certification in early childhood education (pre-K to grade 3). Certification in reading and/or special education (mild to moderate) preferred. Teach graduate and undergraduate courses in curriculum and instruction in early childhood education, special education and/or reading, and graduate education. Supervise field experiences and student teachers. Rank dependent on qualifications. Consideration of applications begins Jan. 15, 2001, and continues until an appointment is made. For information, see <http://www.bluffton.edu>.

  Send letter of interest, vitae, three letters of references and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

classifieds

- **Goshen College** invites applications for a tenure track position in ***Spanish*** beginning August 2001. Generalist, with some preparation in second language acquisition; computer-assisted instructional experience highly desirable. ABD or Ph.D. preferred. Fluent Spanish essential. Teach elementary and intermediate language, with occasional supervision of teacher education students. Possibility of courses in Hispanic studies, specialized courses in medical and/or business Spanish. 24-hour course load, two semesters and one May term. The successful candidate must be willing to accept Goshen College's mission statement and standards and affirm Anabaptist perspectives. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Processing of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

  Send resume and three letters of reference to Academic Dean Paul Keim, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through our web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment."

- **Columbia Bible College** announces ***two faculty openings***. CBC is an accredited Bible college in Abbotsford, B.C., Canada, with a student body of over 500. It is an evangelical Anabaptist college co-sponsored by the Conference of Mennonites in B.C. and the Mennonite Brethren Churches of B.C. The desired areas of expertise for these teaching positions are ***missions/evangelism, theology (biblical, historical) and Bible***. Qualifications include a minimum of a master's degree with a major in one of the above fields, theological education and knowledge of Anabaptist theology and history preferred, agreement with Columbia's mission and confessional statements, a willingness to be a member of sponsoring conference church, experience in ministry, with teaching experience preferred.

  For a copy of the job description or other documents, please contact Dr. Ron Penner, Columbia Bible College, 2940 Clearbrook Road, Abbotsford, BC V2T 2Z8; 604-853-3567 ext. 316; fax 604-853-3063; email <ron.penner@columbiabc.edu>; web site <www.columbiabc.edu>.

  Please forward resume to the attention of Dr. Ron Penner by Feb. 15, 2001, although we will accept resumes until positions are filled. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed in the first instance to Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Starting date summer 2001.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks the following positions:

  Computer information systems: Master's degree required, doctorate preferred. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate (if candidate holds a doctorate) courses.

  Communication: Ph.D. or MFA preferred. Seeking a visionary candidate to join a team developing a new communication major. Primary teaching assignment within the communication major with emphasis on communication theory and an emphasis on production of print and electronic media.

  Special education: Ph.D. preferred and teacher education experience required. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and some graduate (if candidate holds a doctorate) courses in special education methods, educational psychology, needs of diverse learners and possibly some early and elementary education curriculum courses.

  Political science: Ph.D. required. Seeking a candidate with competency in teaching undergraduate political science courses and willingness to teach geography and area studies.

  Spanish: Ph.D. in Spanish required or master's degree with a related doctorate. Seeking a candidate with competency in teaching language, civilization and literature for a growing Spanish program.

  Theater: MFA required. Seeking a candidate with creative thinking skills, sensitivity for the community building aspect of theater and an imaginative vision as the program grows. Teaching may include voice, movement, period styles, stage combat and/or Shakespeare. Opportunities to direct each year and create new courses relevant to the program's commitment to the healing art of theater.

  EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Marie S. Morris, Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email <ugdean@emu.edu>. Review will begin Feb. 1, 2001. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Mount Vernon Mennonite Church**, Kirkwood, Pa., is seeking a full-time ***lead pastor*** with a strong commitment to biblical preaching and a vision to reach the community for Christ.

  Contact John Beitler, 717-529-6071; email <mtvernonmennonite @juno.com>.

- **Goshen College** invites applications for a tenure track position in ***psychology*** beginning August 2001. Qualifications for the position: Ph.D. in psychology, strong commitment to scientific psychology, interest in and ability for departmental leadership. Responsibilities: teach a full load of undergraduate courses, including both lower-level service courses and upper division courses for majors. The successful candidate must be willing to accept Goshen College's mission statement and standards and affirm Anabaptist perspectives. Goshen College, an affirmative action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply. Processing of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

  Send letter addressing qualifications, curriculum vitae, graduate transcript and three current letters of reference to Academic Dean Paul Keim, Goshen College, 1700 S. Main St., Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through our web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment."

- **Executive director for new mission agency of Mennonite Church USA:** Applications are invited for a full-time ***chief executive officer*** to lead the new mission agency to be formed by transformation of the Commission on Home Ministries, Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions into one agency in mid-2001.

  Qualifications: Spiritual maturity; commitment to the theology and values of Mennonite Church USA; passion for mission; ability to lead an emerging, many-faceted ministry; ability to work collaboratively with a diverse constituency; organizational development and executive management skills; strong communication and relational skills; innovative and visionary; global awareness; committed to ethnic sensitivity and anti-racism.

  Experience: Executive management in a church-related organization; cross-cultural experience (international preferred); recognized leadership and credibility within the Mennonite Church and with mission partners; missiological expertise; university or seminary graduate degree in related field.

  Send inquiries and applications to Herman Bontrager, Chair of Search Committee, 908 Oak St., Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-2519; 717-355-2995; email <hbontrager@onemain.com>.

- **Fresno Pacific University** seeks a ***provost*** with appointment effective in the summer of 2001. The provost is responsible for coordinating and sustaining collaborative leadership in accomplishing the educational mission of the university as expressed in the Fresno Pacific Idea and in the mission statement of the university. The provost provides intellectual and academic leadership of the educational program that includes instructional and academic support functions and the student life program, articulates the academic mission and vision of the institution and is an advocate for faculty within institutional governance. The provost is responsible for academic budget preparation and personnel functions and serves as member of the President's Cabinet, chair of the Academic Cabinet and liaison to the Academic Commission of the Board of Trustees.

  Required qualifications include: earned doctorate and a record of successful administrative responsibility including head of a major academic unit; demonstrated excellence as a teacher in a college or university setting and evidence of scholarly achievement; commitment to integration of Christian faith and learning; clear understanding of and commitment to the theological distinctives and mission of the university, including its foundation in the Anabaptist Believers Church tradition; commitment to creating a campus climate supportive of educational equity, including recruiting and developing a more diverse faculty and staff; ability to work collaboratively in an environment of shared governance.

  Nominations and applications should be submitted to Sue Kliewer, Fresno Pacific University, 1717 S. Chestnut, Fresno, CA 93702; 559-453-2245; <skliewer@fresno.edu>. For a full position description and application, visit <www.fresno.edu/dept/personnel/hrindex.html>.

Watch for our 2000 Index in the Dec. 26 issue.

by Gordon Houser

With Christmas approaching, here are some items to consider for gifts:

Check out *Alternatives for Simple Living Fall 2000 Resource Guide*, P.O. Box 2787, Sioux City, IA 51106, 800-821-6153, email <Alternatives@SimpleLiving.org>, or visit the web site at <www.SimpleLiving.org>. You'll find alternative greeting cards, books, videos and articles emphasizing simple living.

More-with-Less Cookbook by Doris Janzen Longacre (Herald Press, 2000, $20.99) has been reissued in a special silver anniversary edition. Since its initial release in 1976, it has gone through 47 printings and 652,500 copies, plus 200,000 copies produced by other publishers, including British and German editions.

Journey Into Christian Art by Helen de Borchgrave (Fortress Press, 2000, $35) is a lavishly illustrated history of Christian art.

The Holy Bible, Botts Illustrated Edition (Tyndale House, 2000, $59.99) uses the New Living Translation and includes 360 colorful illustrations by calligrapher Timothy R. Botts. In process for 16 years, this Bible uses Botts' signature style of "trying to make words look like what they mean."

The 2001 Church World Service Calendar ($10) and *CWS Global Cards* ($5/set of 10) are available from CWS, P.O. Box 968, Elkhart, IN 46515, 800-287-1516, ext. 222. Add $3 for shipping and handling.

The Local Church in a Global Era: Reflections for a New Century, edited by Max L. Stackhouse, Tim A. Dearborn and Scott R. Paeth (Eerdmans, 2000, $15), looks at how the local church is being affected by globalization.

This Blessed Mess: Finding Hope Amidst Life's Chaos by Patricia H. Livingston (Ave Maria Press, 2000, $11.95) offers encouragement through good-humored personal stories.

Amish Children by Phyllis Pellman Good (Good Books, 2000, $35) includes more than 150 full-color photographs by Jerry Irwin of Amish children in their settings.

The Merging: A Story of Two Families and Their Daughter by Evelyn King Mumaw (Pandora Press U.S., 2000, $13.95) traces two family lines, from Switzerland in the 1600s to today.

A Little Left of Center: An Editor Reflects on His Mennonite Experience by Daniel Hertzler (Pandora Press U.S., 2000, $13.95) is an offbeat and often humorous memoir by a longtime Mennonite editor.

When Life Hurts: A Three-Fold Path to Healing by Brian C. Stiller (Herald Press, 2000, $11.99) is dedicated to helping people who are in pain or crisis. Hope, faith and love mark the path to healing.

The Inclusive Hebrew Scriptures Volume I—The Torah (Priests for Equality, 2000, $24.95) is in its final stages of preparation. The publishers are taking orders for a special co-sponsors edition. Write Priests for Equality/Quixote Center, Box 5243, Hyattsville, MD 20782. Already published are *The Inclusive New Testament*, *The Inclusive Psalms* and *The Inclusive Hebrew Scriptures Volume III—The Writings.*

Chatter With Angels: An Illustrated Songbook for Children, compiled and edited by Linda S. Richer and Anita Stoltzfus Breckbill, illustrated by Susan Graber Hunsberger, original and edited accompaniments by Robert N. Roth (GIA Publications, 2000, $29.95), includes traditional and newer songs and will help involve young children in the church. Order from GIA Publications, 7404 S. Mason Ave., Chicago, IL 60638-9927, 800-442-1358.

Recommended reading

The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality by Ronald Rolheiser (Doubleday, 1999, $21.95) is filled with wisdom. He distinguishes theism from Christian belief and outlines the implications of the Incarnation. A Catholic, he tries to address an ecumenical audience and mostly succeeds. "Spirituality," he writes, "is what we do with our unrest." It encompasses our whole being. He adds, "A healthy soul keeps us both energized and glued together." He goes on to look at key elements within a Christian spirituality. His comments on sexuality are among the best I've ever read. This excellent book will reward beginners or veterans of the spiritual journey.—*gh*

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Everett J. Thomas

Advent makes us wait

Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight … and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.—Luke 3:4b,6

For Christians who observe the seasons of the church year, Advent is the beginning of a new year, which unfolds through Lent, Holy Week and the Easter season. For those who follow the church year carefully, Advent is the period of waiting and preparation before the Christmas season.

However, many of us are not as clear about how the Advent season relates to Christmas. If these four weeks are a time of waiting for the Christ child, then it is confusing to hear and sing Christmas carols in early December.

I admit to some personal ambivalence about the Advent season. As soon as Thanksgiving is over, I am ready to sing “Hark the Herald Angels Sing” and linger by nativity scenes. The world in which I live moves on to other things on Dec. 26.

But I know that Advent is not the same as Christmas. The Christmas season begins on Christmas Eve and proceeds to Epiphany on Jan. 6. This period includes “the 12 days of Christmas” which, in many cultures, are all days of gift-giving.

Advent, however, is the four-week period set aside before the Christmas season to remember Israel’s long wait for the Messiah, and to prepare our hearts and homes for Immanuel—God with us. The Advent season also serves as a reminder of our ongoing wait for Christ’s second coming.

Waiting is not easy for those of us in a culture of immediate gratification. The most common form of waiting revolves around the presents under the Christmas tree. Some of us can barely stand the suspense created by the surprises in those neatly wrapped packages.

There are other symbols of this waiting as well. Some of us put candles in the windows of our houses as a sign of anticipation. These warm and welcoming points of light commemorate the painful journey Mary and Joseph made to Bethlehem and show that there is room in our inn. The candles tell our neighbors that we are waiting for the Christ child to come into our homes and into our hearts anew.

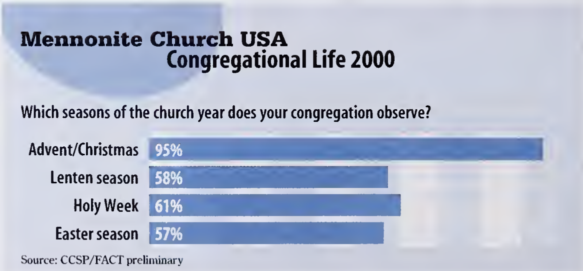
Many congregations use an Advent wreath to walk us through the anticipation. Each Sunday one more candle is lit. By Christmas the varying heights of the candles remind us how long we have waited.

Apparently most congregations in Mennonite Church USA will observe Advent and Christmas this year (see chart below). To help frame the season, a writing team from Allegheny Conference created worship resources published in the September issue of *Builder.* This year’s theme focuses on the way of the Lord.

“When we are most discouraged,” notes the introduction, “the season of Advent comes again and invites us to travel another road—God’s road of healing and hope.”

So these weeks are for working while we wait. These are the days to get the road ready. It is the time when John the Baptist bursts from the wilderness to announce the coming of one greater than he, the one who will be God’s Anointed. It is the season to prepare the way of the Lord.

This, then, is the heart of Advent: preparing while we wait. As a reminder of that moment when God entered our world in human form, we straighten the crooked roads, fill the valleys, flatten the mountains and smooth the rough spots. Each of us is invited to clear the pathway into our heart. All of us are called to make straight the way for God’s healing and hope for the world around us. God’s salvation will come on Christmas Eve in that babe in the manger. To us a child of healing and hope will be born. We wait.—*ejt*



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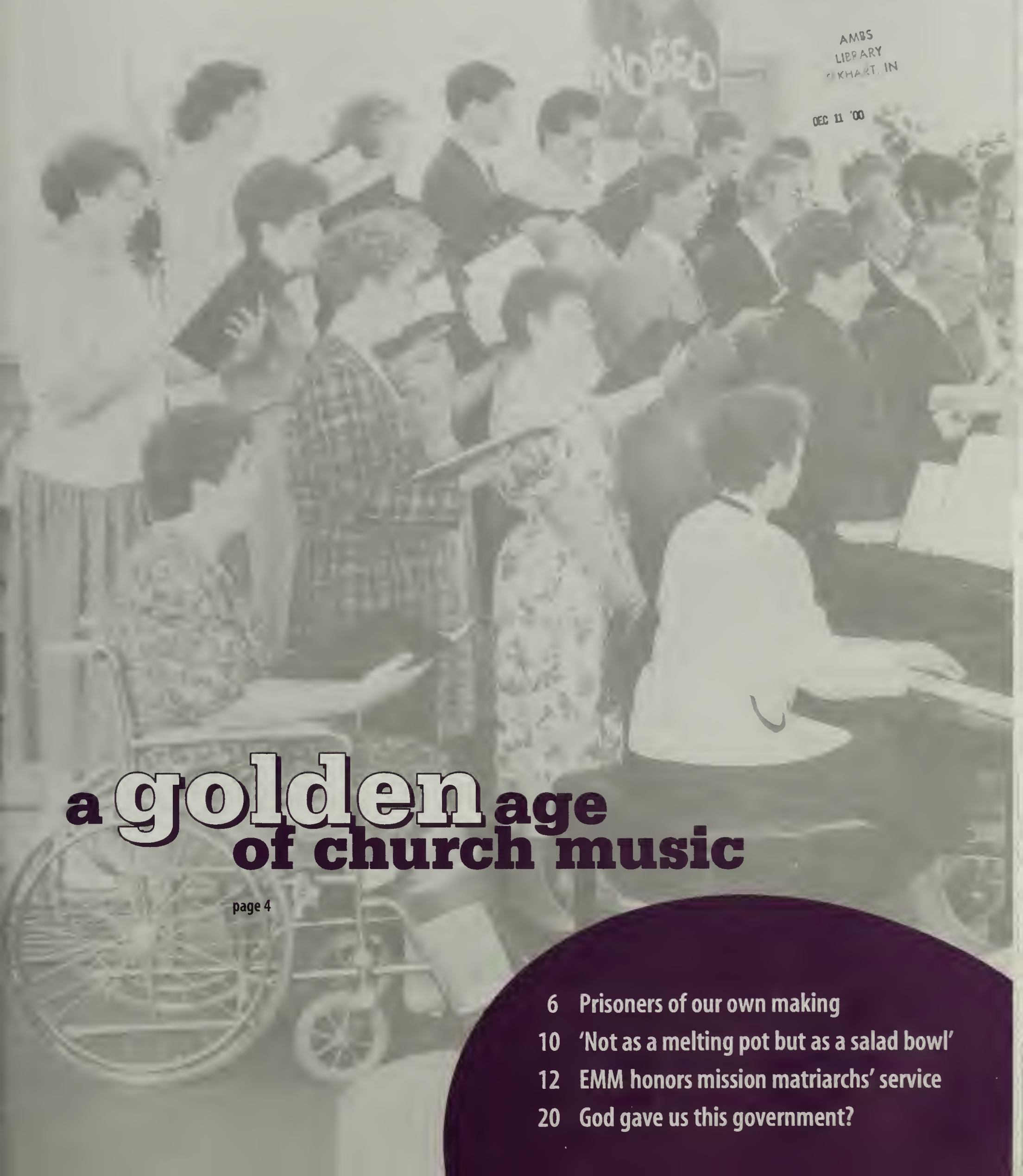

a golden age of church music

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Making sense of it all

As a pastor and a husband, I feel compelled to respond to Monty Ledford's Nov. 21 letter concerning Reta H. Finger's article "Saved Through Childbearing: The Pauline Logic of 1 Timothy 2:8-15" (Oct. 17). The difficulty of the text for me lies in verse 15, which clearly states that women "will be saved through childbearing." I struggle with this statement on many levels.

It would seem to put on women an additional burden in order to secure their salvation. This contradicts the rest of the New Testament, which repeatedly points out that one's relationship with God through Christ is what determines one's salvation. Paul elsewhere points out that this is true for all classes of people, including women (Galatians 3:26-29).

And let us suppose that verse 15 is to be applied rigorously within the body of Christ, which would be the logical consequence of a "straightforward" interpretation. What then, as a pastor, shall I say to those women who cannot bear children? Is their faith in Christ useless? Indeed, as a husband, what shall I say to my wife, since we cannot have children on our own? What also shall I say since the reason she cannot bear children is my fault and not hers? Radiation and chemotherapy treatments for cancer have left me unable to father children. If 1 Timothy 2:15 is strictly applied, is it the grace and logic of God to have my wife punished for my ill health?

Trying to understand alternatives about what the author of 1 Timothy 2 was saying is not the same as "not believing" such a passage. It is simply trying to make sense of all the Bible. I believe that God allowed 1 Timothy into our Bible as God's revelation; I just struggle with weighing its stationing of women against the rest of the New Testament.—*John Hockman, Topeka, Ind.*

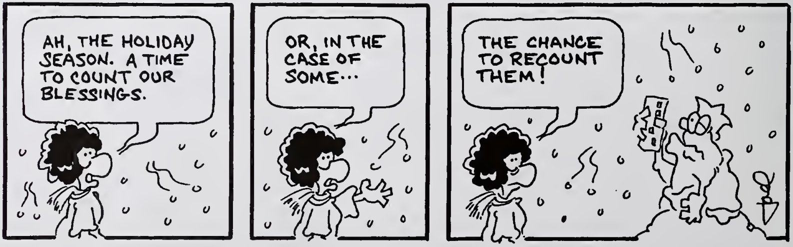
An approach to Scripture that would continue the patriarchal oppression of women rather than follow Jesus in breaking the hold of that immature cultural practice of ancient Israel is a pharisaical approach to Scripture. Paul (if Paul wrote the letters to Timothy) is not Jesus. I have a personal relationship with Jesus; I do not have a personal relationship with Paul. I guess that is why I am a Christian and not a Paulist.—*John K. Stoner, Akron, Pa.*

No thanks

An open letter to President Clinton: Today is Thanksgiving. We have so much for which to be thankful, especially life—and not just the mortal life God gives us through natural birth but also the salvation God offers us by grace through faith. My heart is heavy on this day, however, because my country—the land of my birth, which has given me so much—seeks now to once again become a nation of death by taking away the life of Juan Garza, who is to be killed on Dec. 12 in my name, under the authority of the U.S. government, in the first federal execution in 37 years ("Planned Execution Spurs Church Action," Dec. 5). For this I cannot give thanks to God. Instead my heart cries out, "Not in my name! Lord, have mercy on us!"

It is more than ironic—indeed, it is blasphemous—that we who call ourselves a "nation under God" seek to carry out this terrible act of death while Christians around the world prepare during Advent to welcome and celebrate God's gift of life through the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who was himself executed by the state. Jesus lived and died among us to show us a better way than that of vengeance, retribution and violence. I urge you to follow his example of compassion. When Jesus was asked to pronounce judgment

Pontius' Puddle **by Joel Kauffmann**


AH, THE HOLIDAY SEASON. A TIME TO COUNT OUR BLESSINGS.
OR, IN THE CASE OF SOME...
THE CHANCE TO RECOUNT THEM!

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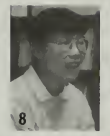

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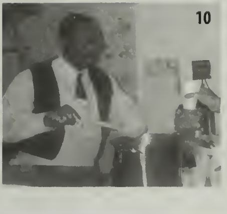

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readers say

in a capital case so that authorities could execute a death sentence, he replied, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to cast a stone." And as Jesus hung on the cross to which the state had nailed him, he redeemed the life of the violent criminal executed beside him who asked for mercy.

I therefore call upon you in the name of Jesus Christ, Lord of the nations, by whose cross the crimes of the repentant sinner are forgiven, to honor him with the authority of your honorable office by commuting Juan Garza's sentence of death. This Christmas as we contemplate the wonderful mystery of God manifest in mortal flesh—God's gift of life to all, even to those who have done great evil—I appeal to you to leave our nation a legacy of life by declaring an executive moratorium on federal executions.—*Darrin Belousek, South Bend, Ind.*

Divine influence

When the Israelites did not let 10 demonstrations of divine power have an influence on them, except for Caleb and Joshua (Numbers 14:20,38), God was provoked and judgment came. God throughout the Bible shows how divine leading comes—prophets, kings, priests—and when people drift from it, God lets an enemy take over.

Now how have Christ and God provided divine leading to us? Does not divine leading come to us, the believers in Christ, by the ever-present Holy Spirit? When the Holy Spirit brings into our own remembrances what Jesus has said, we can choose and let that have an influence on us. Choose divine influence, and let it have an influence on us. Choose inner disturbance, and we human beings become our own enemy. Choice by choice we drift from letting divine leading have the influence on us. Let us remember Christ and God.—*Willard Becker, Freeman, S.D.*

Cover photo
by Marilyn Nolt

A golden age of church music

A tribute to Mennonite church music in the 20th century

by Glenn Lehman

As the sun rises on the 21st century, I'd like to give thanks for an awesome period of music. This is my humble tribute to church music of the past century, which can boast a golden age of shaped-note literacy and of hymnals, a unity of style and faith.

Music literacy: During the 20th century, singing schools produced a golden age of sight singing. That means that by looking at the hymnal the singers could tell what word and what pitch and rhythm to sing. This method, invented long before 1900, won the day in 1903, when the hymnal I used was printed in shaped notes. This method was offered in some Mennonite hymnals until 1992.

Shaped-note reading was the passport to social acceptance. It was the latest technique, and it was cool. It lasted from the Civil War to World War II. The result was a populace that had the rudiments of reading music for the rest of their lives. The first half of the century we paid into this musical capital fund. The second half we drew out. The balance now is low.

Today the equivalent may be youngsters exposed to Kindermusik or Suzuki or buying a keyboard that lights up the next note to be played. Today music education means taking children to Suzuki violin lessons or teenagers to drum lessons. It is rare that children's choir gets priority. Recognized musicians in the church may as likely be the youth who play instruments as people who can lead an alto or tenor section. In church-related schools the choir is a mere specialty competing with jazz and musicals and soccer.

Today music education means taking children to Suzuki violin lessons or teenagers to drum lessons. It is rare that children's choir gets priority.

Marilyn Nolt

For all its benefits, such musical literacy came with a price tag. It drove out the oral unison tradition, which had been developed and then taken for granted since 1525. Though moribund, that style sounded like chant and afforded a rich spirituality in the bones—not just a toe-tapping exercise. Some remnants of it were still heard in the doxology as late as 1950. Literacy allowed us to sing four-part.

The 20th century was, "Sing what's in the book" and "follow the leader" and "speed it up." The previous, oral style was, "Slow down," "fit in" and "cherish each syllable."

When the whole music education of rudiments of singing collapsed, we tended to go into denial about it rather than create a new form of education. "Four-part a cappella" in hindsight might have become a mantra, a stylistic banner we could rally around and forget about fighting against forces of musical ignorance. When dictates of conferences were dropped, we extolled laissez-faire and market forces too easily.

The hymnal century: Denominations grew strong in the 20th century, and one of their signature tools of identity and catechism was the hymnal. No century had hymnals like the 20th, both in their nearly universal acceptance and their place as the sole source of worship music. We "Old Mennonites" limped into the century with a moribund new hymnal, *Hymns and Tunes*, out of date before it was published. In short order, with the latest technology of telegraph, rural delivery mail and steam locomotion at his disposal, J.D. Brunk stirred Mennonites to produce a new hymnal, called the *Church and Sunday School Hymnal* (1903). Its bold agenda blended the staid classic hymns of worship services with easy, popular music sung in Sunday schools and informal settings.

J.D., after the smashing success of *Church and Sunday School*, went on to edit *Life Songs* (one and two) and the *Church Hymnal*, which remained the official music book of the Mennonite Church (MC) until the 1969 red hymnal. For a full two-thirds of the century J.D. had edited much Mennonite music. Then came the *Mennonite Hymnal* for 23 years and *Hymnal: A Worship Book* in 1992. *Songs of the Church* (1953) and *Sing and Rejoice* (1975) were supplements. Before General Conference Mennonite Church members (GCs) and the MCs published jointly, GCs had produced the 1927 *Mennonite Hymn Book*, the 1940 *Mennonite Hymnary* and a German hymnal in 1942.

The century gave us hymnals to praise. Although hymnals reached a magisterial pinnacle in the 20th century, most of the hymns in them were written in the 19th century.

Many hymns: The golden ages of literacy and hymnals came at a time when Old Mennonites finalized their language change from German to English and increased their number of worship services and needed more hymns. Among Old Mennonites, worship moved from fortnightly to every Sunday, worship and school each needing its own chorister. Revival meetings, youth meetings and prayer meetings increased the demand for hymns and song leaders even more. As a child, I went with my parents to church a good 125 times a year. Youth now get to 60-some services a year, many hymnless. Besides, conference rules and the acoustics of plain meetinghouses back then supported those parameters in music.

Hymns important: Throughout the century, producing a hymnal was seen as a weighty theological event. Great sea changes were supposedly observable in the dropping of, say, "Onward Christian Soldiers" or the addition of spirituals or Taizé numbers or the segregation of gospel songs into a style section. Hymnals were going through similar glacial changes in all denominations. A new hymnal proudly exhibited at least one off-beat harmonization, unusual tune, rhythm or a more friendly way to intone the Psalms. Bridges were always attempted between the serious art music or folk music of the time. But people still paged through the new book to see if "Sweet Hour of Prayer," "How Great Thou Art" or "The Old Rugged Cross" were there. The biographies of Fanny Crosby and other hymn and gospel songwriters were part of the common knowledge of church culture.

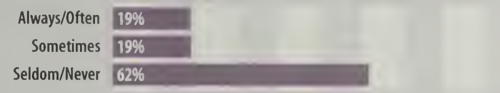
As the 21st century becomes our time frame, the traditional hymnal as a primary fixture of worship becomes less and less universal. It is being supplemented and sometimes supplanted by congregation-produced booklets, photocopiers, overhead projectors and, back from the early 19th century, an oral tradition, this time of choruses.

Unified identity: The century can be remembered as a time of unique consensus in music. That near unanimity made group boundary or ethnic sense. In 1903 it solidified an agreed-upon sound and style, as we worked hard to achieve uniformity in lifestyles. Now another strong cultural agenda, much harder to define, exists. Uniformity it is not, although at ceremonious occasions we can still gather behind the four-part a cappella banner. But it has something to do with welcoming the whole world, of not trying to confine people to one style or assume that one size fits all. Perhaps it is hoping the world welcomes us.

Noble as this goal is, it comes with difficulty and requires humor to keep us from looking too silly as we go on in denial about our own favorites or get politically correct for the sake of it. We will sing any song in the world as long as it isn't great-aunt Mabel's favorite. Or we will sing Chinese-produced tunes when most of the Christians in China are deliberately singing Fanny Crosby, and Presbyterians in Baghdad sing "How Great Thou Art" and "Nearer My God to Thee," according to recent reports. One congregational leader told me, "We can't assume there's any song known and loved by all."

Mennonite Church USA
Congregational Life 2000

How often are drums or other percussion instruments used in your worship services?



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Contrasts, continuums and cycles: I give thanks for the sifting out taking place today, sometimes intelligently. Classical artists today sometimes practice rapprochement with popular culture. To what degree should the sound track of our worship life resemble the sound track of secular life? Of classical music concerts? Of pop music?

In some ways our music from 1900 to 2000 has barely changed: Leadership of singing remains mainly voluntary and amateur, and congregational singing is an essential part of worship. In some ways it is different: Instruments are welcomed, acoustics have drastically deteriorated and one may hear a secular song at a wedding. There was a time in some congregations when the singing would stop when the ministers entered the sanctuary. A long sermon could eliminate a hymn or offertory. Music today isn't as likely to be omitted from the agenda.

As the 20th century's last worship team pulls its amp plug, as the last key is blown on a pitch pipe, as the last overhead transparency slips crooked, as the last hymnal is returned to its rack and a new century dawns, this is how I give thanks for the passing golden age.

Glenn Lehman is a musician serving Sunday morning settings and director of Harmonies Workshop, a music ministry in Leola, Pa.

Musical memories of church music from the past 50 years:

In 1949 hearing the Chuck Wagon Gang belt out "Old Time Religion" on our Victrola at home; in 1950 seeing choristers stand on the front bench and use a tuning fork for pitch; in 1952 the Old Order singing school teacher leading "Gott Ist Die Liebe" in a one-room schoolhouse; "We Are Going Down the Valley" sung largo from memory without a song leader at a funeral in 1954; in 1958 taking a guitar lesson and learning "On the Jericho Road"; in 1959 singing second tenor in a quartet of teenage boys at a street meeting in Philadelphia; the first time I led a hymn in 1960; in 1961 playing an electronic organ at wedding receptions; in 1962 finding a music theory book in the library and teaching myself composition; in 1963 singing Haydn's "The Heavens Are Telling" a cappella; in 1964 accompanying *Messiah* on a rented electronic keyboard at my alma mater's old gym; in 1967 playing a cheap electronic keyboard in a mission church in Brussels; in 1968 playing a portable reed organ in a Mennonite Brethren school chapel in Congo; having a dean rap my knuckles for playing organ music over the PA system as the students left chapel; the tingle of excitement the first time I picked up the 1969 *Mennonite Hymnal*; recoiling at hearing Mennonite composers' atonal music in 1981; reporting for our church papers on one of the joint hymnal committee meetings about 1989; discovering the beauty of the Old Order tunes, 1991; writing *You Can Lead Singing* in 1993.—*Glenn Lehman*

difficult texts of the Bible

And that's the way it was with us before Christ came. We were slaves to the spiritual powers of this world.—Galatians 4:3 NLT

Prisoners of our own making

Seventh in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by George R. Brunk III

When I study ancient cultures, I often assume that their simpler forms of life imply a simpler way of thinking about life. But then I encounter the writings of an ancient philosopher or a work like the book of Job and I realize that is not the case at all. The intellectual power and spiritual insight of ancient times matches, if not surpasses, that of modern times. Because certain material and technical advances have been made does not mean that improvements have happened in every part of life.

An example of ancient wisdom is the analysis of our human condition that Paul makes in his letter to the Galatians. For Paul, all people are in some form of bondage as long as they do not know the freedom that comes in knowing Christ. A careful look at Galatians 4:1-11 reveals the astonishing claim that both the law-observing Jew and the pagan are in conditions of slavery. At least they are in relative bondage compared with the glorious freedom that comes in Christ. To describe this enslavement Paul uses a word unusual for the Bible and difficult to interpret, "stoicheia" in Greek. We can translate it as "elements" or "rudiments." So we read in Galatians 4:3 (my translation), "That is the way it is with us; while we were of immature age, we were enslaved to the elements of the world." Paul has just cited the illustration of the youthful heir who is not yet mature and must be cared for by others. The heir's condition is little different from a slave. Everyone, without exception, is in that condition until they come to maturity by knowing Christ.

Paul is making a bridge between the Jewish roots of the gospel and his Gentile audience. That confirms the feeling that something profound is being expressed.

But what are these "elements" that dominate and control people? The very strangeness of the idea fascinates us. The word comes from the philosophical thinking of the Greeks. Paul is making a bridge between the Jewish roots of the gospel and his Gentile audience. That confirms the feeling that something profound is being expressed. A glance at our various translations, however, shows a difference of opinion about its meaning. Some translate the word as "elementary spirits," suggesting beings in the spirit realm. Others translate with phrases like "elementary principles" or "rudimentary teachings." This difference does not necessarily reflect opinions about the existence or nonexistence of spirits and demons. It reflects different meanings of the word in Paul's day and the fact that Paul's use of the word is not clearly on one side or the other.

For the time when Paul lived, we can document two meanings of "elements." First, it could mean the basic materials of which the world is thought to be formed. The Greeks described them as earth, water, fire and air. This meaning is found in 2 Peter 3:10,12. Second, the word could mean the basic or foundational principles of life or some aspect of life. Hebrews 5:12 uses it this way. When we turn to Paul's use in Galatians 4 and Colossians 2, we find clear evidence to support this second meaning. In Galatians 4:3 it is the Jewish Law, as understood by the Jewish nation, that provided the foundational principles for a Jew. This formed a basic framework of beliefs and practices that gave meaning and direction to life. These are "elements." They control those who order their lives by them. The reference to specific practices of Jewish religion also appears in 4:10. Here Paul is illustrating how the Galatian Gentile Christians are coming under the "elements" when they submit to the Jewish Law. In Colossians Paul associates the "elements" with regulations of human conduct that are "simply human commands and teachings" (Colossians 2:20-22 NRSV). Paul thinks of "the elements" as beliefs and practices that people create. They are not spirit beings of some kind.

But there is more. In the same contexts in both Galatians and Colossians are references to otherworldly beings and powers (Galatians 4:8; Colossians 2:15). Galatians draws a parallel between enslavement to false gods and enslavement to the elements. This suggests some relationship between the elements and spirit beings or powers. Paul does not explain this relationship or the exact nature of these beings. But in light of his overall teaching, it seems Paul believes that powers beyond the visible world stand behind the forms (elements) of life that people create. These powers use the elements to control or enslave those same people. The elements are the forms of thought and structures of life that are part of normal human experience. However, spiritual powers use these as the instruments in their exercise of influence over individuals and societies. This would be consistent with Paul's (and the Bible's) subtle view of how divine power and human action both play a part in events in history.

Some suggest, with good reason, that our modern term "worldview" may come close to expressing what Paul means by the elements. Worldview is the basic framework of convictions about the world that particular cultures and ideologies develop in order to make sense of life, giving it meaning and purpose. Specific rituals and practices give expression to the worldview and allow it to be lived out. It is religious-like and, in fact, religions are prime examples of it. Contemporary thinkers emphasize that the humans and human communities are creators of stories and myths that provide a rationale for how they live. These same thinkers like to unmask these "big stories" by showing how little basis they have in any final, absolute truth and how much they merely reflect personal interests. As a result we become slaves in the very house of meaning that we build. What we thought was the way to freedom ends in bondage. The situation is like that of the spider that spins its web. The spider's existence depends on the web, but the web also limits the spider. The spider's prey is the victim of the web, but in some sense the spider is a victim as well.

This sounds much like what Paul was saying centuries ago. All of the religious options he sees have in common a bondage to elements. The case of the pagan religions is clear enough. The case of Israel, however, is unusual because God has given a good and true law to her. But Israel has turned law into elements by forgetting that the way of faith in God is more fundamental than law. Moreover, Israel has used the law to protect herself and her interests from the world and has consequently failed to be a blessing to the world.

In contrast to the current trends of thought that see no way out of this human bondage, Paul dares to claim that in Jesus a way to true freedom has been given as a gift of God. The beginning point is that Jesus Christ is God come into our world. He therefore breaks out of the limitations of earth-bound elements. In Jesus, God has authored a big story about life that is anchored in God's love, not human interests. The life this story offers is not a system of ideas or a set of guidelines for living. It is a family-like relationship with God through the person of Jesus Christ and the enabling work of the Spirit. It does not aspire to human knowing as its ground of certainty but rests in the assurance that God knows who is a child of God (Galatians 4:9a). God's story encompasses us, rather than our story trying to include God. This will not make sense to those who see the bondage of human knowing but still demand to be in control of their own fate. It does make sense to those who, like Paul, have met Jesus the Christ face to face and experienced him as true Liberator.

In contrast to the current trends of thought that see no way out of this human bondage, Paul dares to claim that in Jesus a way to true freedom has been given as a gift of God.

George R. Brunk III teaches Bible at Eastern Mennonite Seminary, Harrisonburg, Va.

Mission stories 3
a tM series

Growing toward fellowship

Aoi Tamura changed from being task-oriented to being people-oriented.

by Bethany Swope

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

Before, I lived my life by what I wanted to do and what was convenient for me. Now I am able to think about other people.

—Aoi Tamura

On Nov. 7, 1999, nine people gathered for worship at Kitami Mennonite Church, a now 13-year-old congregation on the northern island of Hokkaido in Japan. The seven adults present shared their first impressions of church, Christians and what led them to faith. It was "thinking about baptism" month, as the congregation worked to answer the questions of its newest participant about the meaning of baptism.

The congregation is a family to each other. Their numbers are small, but they are determined to continue together in fellowship. "Even the little handful that we are, to gather together and know that we are met by God is a gift … worth any price," says Mary Beyler, a mission worker in Kitami since 1988, appointed by Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM) and the Commission on Overseas Mission. She has served in Japan since 1974.

In this third story of a four-part series, Aoi Tamura shares her story. A gentle woman with a sharp mind and a ready smile, she shares with forthrightness and humor.

Aoi took gradual steps toward Christianity, accompanied by a young Christian man, a supportive congregation and a missionary who happened to be a good cook.

"Probably the first time I visited a church was when I was doing research at Hokkaido University," she says. A young man named Takuya Tamura invited her to a service at Yuai Mennonite Church.

"There's a teacher named Norman Kraus [MBM worker], who speaks well. Why don't you come along to hear him?" he said.

She remembers the narrow room where the church rented space at the Hokkaido Christian Center in Sapporo. "It was hard to arrive late because of the small room," she says. "But the church people helped me find a place to sit. I felt at home from the first time I visited."

She did wonder about the "Amen" at the end of every hymn. "It seemed weird," she says.

She attended church once or twice a month while preparing for graduate school entrance exams. Two months after starting graduate school, Aoi and Takuya had an engagement ceremony in the church, even though Aoi did not yet consider herself a Christian. Soon she began attending church almost weekly.

"I wasn't thinking about baptism, but I was asked to be on a Yuai Mennonite Church committee, so I was actively involved before I became an official member," she says.

They married in the church four months later, in October 1984. The next spring, Norman Kraus started a beginning-level Bible class.

For Aoi, it became a baptism preparation class. She said it was "a class for doubters because Norman Kraus could answer any question." About a year later, he asked if she wanted to be baptized. "The class was fun, but I wasn't as far as believing in Jesus yet, so I refused," she says. "I wasn't ready."

The next year, Norman offered the class again. Aoi said she attended again despite her continued doubts because "Ruth Kraus made good snacks." She also attended a baking class taught by Ruth. "I guess you could say I became a Christian because of Ruth Kraus' baking—especially brownies," she says.

In 1987, as Aoi worked on her master's thesis in psychology, the Tamuras made plans to move to Kitami, where Takuya had been hired as a professor of psychology. The Yuai church encouraged Aoi to receive baptism in Sapporo before they left. By this time she had come to believe in Jesus, so she asked for baptism. "The baptismal water was in a kitchen pan with a ribbon tied around it," she says. A number of North American Mennonite missionaries were at the church that Sunday because of a conference in Sapporo.

"When I decided to receive baptism, I realized I had already changed," she says. "Before, I lived my life by what I wanted to do and what was convenient for me. Now I am able to think about other people."

She says it was when a friend's father died that she recognized the change. When she heard the news, she was working to meet a crucial deadline for her master's thesis. In the past, she would have felt sorry for her friend, but the drive to complete an important task would have been stronger. When she became a Christian, she learned to be people-oriented rather than task-oriented. "I realized I could make time to go see a mourning friend," she says. "Faith had changed me."

Kitami Mennonite Church formed in 1987 when the Tamuras, with another Mennonite family and a single woman who all moved to Kitami about the same time, met for worship with two Christians who lived in Kitami and had previous connections to Mennonites. Aoi, a professor of psychology, corrects the Japanese in sermons Mary Beyler preaches to congregations throughout Hokkaido. "Her corrections help me say more clearly what I mean to say. I learn from my sermons through the comments and questions she writes," says Mary.

Bethany Swope is a writer for Mennonite Board of Missions. Part four of this series will appear in our Dec. 19 issue.

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'Not as a melting pot but as a salad bowl'

Multicultural church plant goal of St. Louis initiative

ST. LOUIS—The legacy of the City on a Hill program for St. Louis will likely be some new bridges. Not the kind of bridges that cars or trains can cross in this metropolitan area of more than 2.5 million people, with physical boundaries defined by the Mississippi and the Missouri rivers. Rather, these bridges are forming between people of diverse ages, races, economic groups and faith histories.

St. Louis Mennonites were this year's recipients of $35,000, to be given over two years: $25,000 from the Commission on Home Ministries and $10,000 plus the services of a consultant from Mennonite Board of Missions. This was the first year the two agencies have cooperated in the City on a Hill program, which makes grants for holistic urban ministries.

There are two active Mennonite congregations in St. Louis: Bethesda Mennonite Church, a predominantly African-American congregation that grew out of church-planting efforts in inner-city St. Louis in the late 1950s, and St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship, which celebrated its 20th anniversary this year, and has traditionally drawn a more mobile and transient, predominantly white, population.

In the last several months, the St. Louis City on a Hill committee has come up with a vision statement, purpose and core values for planting a multiethnic and multicultural Mennonite congregation in St. Louis. Now the committee is looking for a church planter.

"We've organized a concerted prayer effort to find a [church planter] from among us or in our city," says Ed Springer, pastor of St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship. "We have only had a few people praying so far, and we haven't been praying very long, and already we have four possibilities."

The four candidates—all men, three black and one white—have emerged as a result of the contacts of various City on a Hill committee members. One man is nearing retirement as a Presbyterian minister in south St. Louis and would like to start a house church in northern St. Louis County. Another is a funeral director who has had frequent interaction with families who have no church connection. A third man has been leading an independent, nondenominational congregation for the past decade. The fourth has a men's ministry in "north city," where Bethesda is located.

GCMC-MBM photo by Portia Dunigans

James Long of Bethesda Mennonite Church serves soup to a member from St. Louis Mennonite Fellowship. The two St. Louis congregations gather for worship and a meal together on the fifth Sunday of a month.

"Since we're clear that we won't be giving grants [for church planting] to people who aren't Mennonite, part of our challenge is teaching about Anabaptism and its values," Springer says.

Says Bethesda pastor Rick Maclin: "One thing we knew from the beginning was that we wanted a multicultural congregation. We want to embrace many different cultures. Not as a melting pot but as a salad bowl, where we maintain our identity and are also able to worship together."

"City on a Hill is being used by God to bring us together," says James Long, a member of Bethesda and of the City on a Hill committee. "The problem isn't just between our two churches but between black and white Christians. My vision is that we as Mennonites in this city would come closer together and be an example as a Christian family, not as black or white."

The two congregations are trying to come closer. In addition to doing business, a priority for the committee members is getting to know each other. "This is not something we have done before," Springer says.

Also, in months when there are five Sundays, the two congregations gather for worship and a meal together, alternating between their facilities.—*Melanie Zuercher of GCMC and MBM news services*

Edmonton chosen 2001 City on a Hill

Edmonton has been selected as the City on a Hill for 2001 by the Commission on Home Ministries (CHM) and Mennonite Board of Missions (MBM).

Edmonton is home to eight Mennonite congregations, including Chinese, Hispanic and Vietnamese. The City on a Hill proposal was submitted by Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church, First Mennonite Church and Holyrood Mennonite Church.

The three congregations' proposal included five projects: hiring a chaplain to help at-risk families, starting a congregation or ministry with French Africans, hiring a parish nurse and expanding children's ministry at Edmonton Chinese Mennonite Church and youth outreach at First Mennonite Church.—*GCMC and MBM news services*

From Mexican tamales to Russian borscht, relief sales give taste of growing church family

AKRON, Pa.—Mexican tamales, Brunswick stew and Ethiopian "injera" are foods with deep cultural roots. But their presence at Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) relief sales is something new. Building on traditions of connecting communities and supporting Christian service, sales springing up across North America also give a taste of the growing Mennonite family.

This year saw successful sales in Sarasota, Fla.; Atlanta; and Clarence, N.Y. In 2001, Mennonites in south Texas and in Minneapolis-St. Paul will bring the total number of relief sales to 45. Two new sales were added in 1999, one in Versailles, Mo., and one in McHenry, Md.

Relief sales have been a tradition in established Mennonite communities for decades, featuring standard fare such as shoo-fly pie and borscht, in addition to auctions of quilts and crafts. This format has been embraced by the new sales as well—with their own twists.

On Feb. 10, the auction in San Juan, Texas, will start off with the sale of homemade flour tortillas rather than the standard loaf of bread. In this primarily Hispanic area, life along the U.S.-Mexico border will be celebrated with mariachi music and local crafts, and a display will memorialize the 437 emigrants who have died along the border since 1997.

In addition to celebrating their regional culture, Mennonites in south Texas—a region known as "the Valley"—want to use the relief sale to spread the word about themselves.

"We want people here in the Valley to know who Mennonites are," says Felipe Hinojosa, MCC Central States Southern Tier associate. "We want people to know we care about peace, we care about our world."

Other new sales reflect the growth of the Mennonite community in urban areas. In downtown Atlanta, the "Peach Cobbler Mennonite World Relief Sale," was held Oct. 28, raising $30,000. In addition to peach cobbler, the sale lunch featured traditional Southern foods such as Brunswick stew.

Phil Helmuth, North America relief sale coordinator, attributes the increasing number of sales in part to the greater emphasis MCC U.S. is placing on leadership in the agency's four regions. This approach has created a "synergy that has developed as the result of a cooperative effort," he says. "Regional staff, local committees or interested persons, the relief sale board—all of those are working together to getting sales started."

Planners of the new sales have been encouraged by the support they receive from the more established venues. "We had several MCC sale junkies who came from Kansas, Ohio, Virginia," says Mary Maynard, a coordinator for the Atlanta sale. "We had a lot of outside help. I think we will need to have this support if we want to grow."

MCC photo by Missy Stoner

A volunteer inspects the Brunswick stew at the first Peach Cobbler Mennonite World Relief Sale, held in Atlanta Oct. 28. It raised $30,000 for the work of Mennonite Central Committee.

The relief sales connect participants not only to the larger church but also to other Mennonite groups in their own community. At the Minnesota sale, an Amish group from Wisconsin will assist. In western New York, the sale involved rural and urban congregations. And in South Texas, the local Mennonite Brethren and Mennonite Church congregations had rarely worked together before.

"I didn't even know some of the congregations existed until this," says planning committee secretary Ruth Salinas. "Now we're all working for the same cause."

"The highlight of our sale will be homemade tamales," Hinojosa says. "Thanks to a group coming from Kansas, we'll also be serving borscht."—*Rachel Beth Miller of MCC News Service*

Goshen group first to meet with SOA

As thousands of demonstrators were outside the U.S. Army's Fort Benning in Georgia, protesting the base's infamous School of the Americas (SOA) Nov. 18, about 40 Goshen (Ind.) College students and faculty members were inside meeting with base personnel.

The Goshen contingent, along with several students from Bethany Christian High School in Goshen and a handful of people from other colleges, spent about four hours with Col. Glenn Weidner, SOA's commandant, and SOA professors and students.

Eric Kanagy, a Goshen sophomore from Lancaster, Pa., initiated the meeting with a simple phone call. School of the Americas officials told him that they had long wanted to meet with protesters, but Goshen was the only group that asked.

"It made [SOA] a real place with real people and real issues, not just this demonized place," Kanagy said. "They had thought of us as the dumb protesters. We came out of there understanding each other. Not agreeing but understanding."

EMM honors mission matriarchs' service

SALUNGA, Pa.—The day after Thanksgiving, friends and family gathered at Eastern Mennonite Missions headquarters in Salunga to give thanks and honor to two retiring EMM missionary matriarchs with a combined 59 years of service.

Bertha Beachy served for 27 years in East Africa and at EMM headquarters. Stella Newswanger served 32 years in Tanzania and the Caribbean.

"Tonight we're celebrating three things: the role of women, the role of Africa and the role of singles," EMM president Richard Showalter told the gathering.

Beachy went to Somalia in 1958 and spent 18 years there teaching and working in a Christian bookstore. That was followed by two years working with Somalis in Kenya and two years of mission education work based in Salunga. For the past five years, she has been working at the EMM-Mennonite Central Committee desk in Nairobi, Kenya.

"It's been difficult and complicated, but I have been blessed," said Beachy, a member of College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Ind.

Newswanger was a teacher and administrator in Tanzania for 17 years, starting in 1966. For the past 15 years, she has worked with Lighthouse Literature (formerly Choice Books Caribbean) in St. Croix and Puerto Rico. Newswanger is a member of Nickel Mines Mennonite Church in Quarryville, Pa.

Newswanger acknowledged that although some of her years in Tanzania were challenging, she always saw God's faithfulness.—*Jewel Showalter of EMM News Service*

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Raising money a ministry for Bethel development worker

NORTH NEWTON, Kan.—Over the last 28 years, Bethel College director of development Larry Voth has raised more than $50 million for the North Newton school. But he didn't do it because it was his job.

"Fund raising for Larry became a mission and a ministry," former Bethel president Harold Schultz said in a tribute to Voth at a Nov. 11 banquet on the Bethel campus. Voth plans to retire at the end of June 2001.

Voth has raised gifts for at least eight major campus construction and renovation projects, including the recently completed New Residence Hall and the next project, Krehbiel Science Center.

"You asked people to support Bethel because you believe in and care for Bethel," said president Douglas Penner. "You were never shy, because you knew that supporting Bethel isn't just an act of generosity, it is an act of joy and thanksgiving."

Alberta votes down motion to dissolve

Conference adopts covenant amid homosexuality issue

CARSTAIRS, Alta.—The Conference of Mennonites in Alberta (CMA), a Mennonite Church Canada provincial conference that has been torn apart by homosexuality and church membership, survived a special conference session Nov. 4 in Carstairs.

A motion to dissolve the conference failed by a 34-79 vote. Instead, delegates approved 71-39 a "covenant of renewal" to seek unity and restoration among the membership.

At the center of CMA's struggles is how to deal with Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church, which accepts noncelibate homosexuals as members. The conference has fielded many calls to discipline Calgary, and several congregations have withdrawn from the conference because no action has been taken. Earlier this year, Calgary offered to withdraw from CMA activities for five years.

The covenant of renewal, brought by Trinity Mennonite Church in Calgary, accepts Calgary's offer and suggests that the congregation's return to conference participation will require much discernment.

The covenant of renewal consists of four parts: reaffirming commitment to God and each other, rebuilding trust, focusing on the mission of the church and dealing with unfinished agenda.

"If we divide, we simply add to the agenda, not simplify it," said Trinity co-pastor Hugo Neufeld. "There are still enormous possibilities to find ways to work together."

The motion to dissolve was brought by the Rosemary, Tofield and Calgary Vietnamese congregations. By staying together, said Rosemary pastor Roy Hewko, "we may be harming each other. We might be better off giving blessings to each other to move apart."

But Lowell Hackman, delegate from Foothills Mennonite Church in Calgary said, "An alternative vision needs to be in place before dissolution can be considered."

Several delegates were concerned that the covenant of renewal and continuing dialogue won't produce any resolution on the issue. "It is clear that dialogue won't change viewpoints," said Dave Paetkau of Hillcrest Mennonite Church, Grand Prarie. "We don't want continuing dialogue."—*Canadian Mennonite*

Correction: Choice Books is organized into eight regional distributorships, not seven as reported in the Nov. 21 issue.

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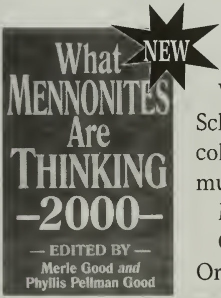
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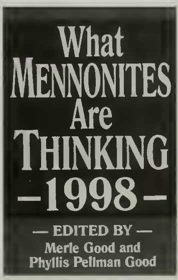
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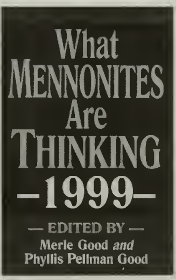
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In a recent survey, 42 percent of Mennonite Church Canada members said they read church publications more than they did five years ago.—*Canadian Mennonite*

Christmas Sharing Fund to support media work

ELKHART, Ind.—The Mennonite Church's Christmas Sharing Fund this year will focus on outreach through the mass media. The annual Christmas appeal to congregations will support Christian witness in largely Islamic countries and support media efforts to share the gospel of peace during next summer's Mennonite Church USA convention in Nashville, Tenn.

Middle East Media, supported by Mennonite Board of Missions, has a goal of providing access to the gospel through books, magazines and television programs to every family in the Middle East by 2020. The media strategy for the Nashville convention, to be held July 2-7, 2001, includes a billboard, bus cards and radio ads.

Bluffton plan to cut campus vehicular traffic

BLUFFTON, Ohio—The Bluffton College trustees want a campus core with no vehicles, according to a master plan approved to guide the school's physical growth and environment during the next two decades.

The plan restricts vehicular circulation at the core and provides parking at the campus periphery. The goal, says the planning team, is to maintain Bluffton's environment as a residential college. About 90 percent of the school's traditional undergraduate students live on campus.

Other plans include a new residence hall, recreation facilities and campus entrance enhancements.

Newspaper columnist receives creation award

NEWTON, Kan.—Joe Blowers, a newspaper columnist, science teacher and member of Portland (Ore.) Mennonite Church, has been selected as the recipient of the 2000 Art Meyer Creation Care Award by the Mennonite Environmental Task Force. Blowers was recognized for his regular column in *Mennonite Weekly Review,* "What on Earth?," which addresses issues such as energy conservation and environmental protection. He also teaches junior high school science in Portland.

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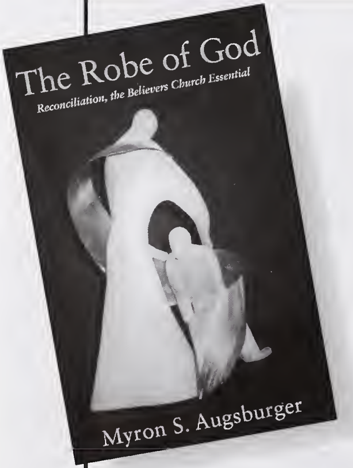

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Births

Berry, Aya Marie, Nov. 21, to Edmund Jr. and Suzi (El Lati) Berry, Perkasie, Pa.

Bontrager, Aaron Luis, Aug. 22, 1998, received for adoption Oct. 17, 2000, by Greg and Nancy (Sauder) Bontrager, Wauseon, Ohio.

Halteman, Taylor Nicole, Nov. 12, to Brandon and Debra (Mace) Halteman, Line Lexington, Pa.

Nolander, Caleb Christian, Nov. 10, to Curtis and Nedra (Rufenacht) Nolander, Whitmore Lake, Mich.

Robert, Brynna Rose, Nov. 7, to Frank and Shiela (Zehr) Robert, Metairie, La.

Rufenacht, Logan Bray, Nov. 6, to Brad and Tina (Roth) Rufenacht, Archbold, Ohio.

Stutzman, Cassidy Jean, Nov. 3, to Crystal Poehler and Brad Stutzman, Wood River, Neb.

Widmer, Connor Dale, Nov. 13, to Kim (Kluber) and Monte Widmer, Wayland, Iowa.

Wind, Julian Patrick, Nov. 6, to Laurel Rudd and Andrew Wind, Cedar Falls, Iowa.

Marriages

Cisco/Kandel: Kumar Cisco, Houston, and Brooke Kandel, Eureka, Ill., Sept. 9 at Boulder, Colo.

Comardelle/Dykes: Jeremy Comardelle, Luling, La., and Brandy Dykes, Denham Springs, La., Sept. 9 at Baton Rouge, La.

Ditzler/Stair: Elizabeth Ditzler, Harleysville, Pa., and Zack Stair, Greenlane, Pa., Nov. 25 at Grace Mennonite Church, Lansdale, Pa.

Deaths

Barkey, Ruth Hartman Miller, 95, Wakarusa, Ind., died Nov. 6. Spouse: (1st) Theodore Miller (deceased); (2nd) Walter Barkey (deceased). Parents: William and Mary Hartman (deceased). Survivors: children Doris Hartman, Beatrice Shetler; stepchildren Wilma Yoder, Phyllis Detweiler, Donna Hartman, Lois Miller; three grandchildren; 13 stepgrandchildren; nine great-grandchildren; 27 stepgreat-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 9 at Olive Mennonite Church, Elkhart, Ind.

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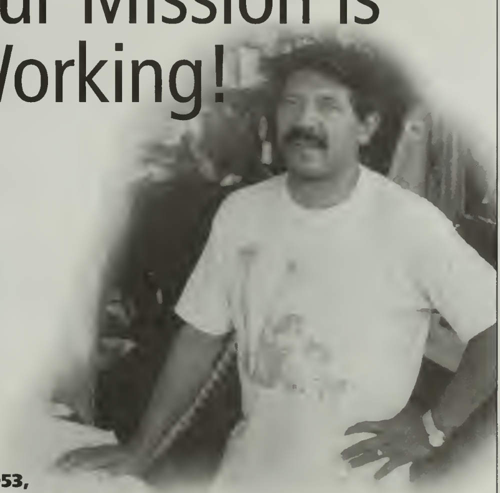

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Neuschwander, Ruth Elizabeth Fisher, 90, Tualatin, Ore., died Nov. 9. Spouse: Arthur Neuschwander (deceased). Parents: Joel and Ida Fisher (deceased). Survivors: children Gerald, Joel, Karen Kropf, Sandra Rider, Liz Carter; 16 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Nov. 19 at Zion Mennonite Church, Hubbard, Ore.

Roth, Mabel Meyer, 96, Wayland, Iowa, died Nov. 5. Spouse: Clarence Roth (deceased). Parents: David and Lavina Roth Meyer (deceased). Survivors: children Max, Wilbur, Evelyn Garrett; 14 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 9 at Sugar Creek Mennonite Church, Wayland.

Schrock, Joseph Jr., 89, Glendale, Ariz., died Oct. 27. Spouse: Grace Bachman Schrock. Parents Joseph Sr. and Lydia Rediger Schrock (deceased). Other survivors: children James, Jay; seven grandchildren. Memorial service: Nov. 26 at Glencroft Community Church, Glendale.

Steury, Virgil, 79, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 7 of complications from cancer. Spouse: Ada Troyer Steury. Parents: Victor and Lucy Lengacher Steury (deceased). Other survivors: children Helen Nafziger, Robert, Douglas; 11 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 10 at North Goshen Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Wiebe, Esther Claassen, 99, Whitewater, Kan., died Nov. 4. Spouse: Willie Wiebe (deceased). Parents: John and Elizabeth Thierstein Claassen (deceased). Survivors: children Evelyn Quiring, Lloyd, Kenneth; 14 grandchildren; 26 great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Nov. 11 at Emmaus Mennonite Church, Whitewater.

Yoder, Lydia Zook, 82, Belleville, Pa., died Nov. 7. Spouse: Jesse Yoder (deceased). Parents: Henry and Annie Peachey Zook (deceased). Survivors: children Delores Knepp, Anna Marinos, Judy Heide, Joyce Yoder; 11 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 11 at Allensville (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

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- **Lancaster Mennonite High School** needs a full-time, short-term ***chemistry teacher*** from Jan. 16 to June 1, 2001. For more information, call 717-299-0436, ext. 302.

- **Freeman Academy**, Freeman, S.D., grades 5-12, seeks full-time ***admissions recruiter***. Base pay $15,000 plus $500 per student. Contact 605-925-4237; fax 605-925-4271.

- **Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church** seeks a half-time ***associate/youth pastor***. Send resume by Dec. 31 to Search Committee, Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, 655 S. Lorraine, Wichita, KS 67211-3093; email <lamcpastor@prodigy.net>.

- **Mount Vernon Mennonite Church**, Kirkwood, Pa., is seeking a full-time ***lead pastor*** with a strong commitment to biblical preaching and a vision to reach the community for Christ.

  Contact John Beitler, 717-529-6071; email <mtvernonmennonite@juno.com>.

- **Eden Mennonite Church**, Moundridge, Kan., is seeking a full-time ***associate pastor*** willing to work with youth and in team ministry. Position available summer 2001. See our web site at <http://homepage.netspaceonline.com/~edenmc/church.html>

  Send resume to Jay Goering, 2002 Arrowhead Rd., Moundridge, KS 67107; email <mpaajay@yahoo.com>.

- **Africa knowledge, experience and vision?** Administrative expertise? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for an ***Africa co-director*** to share administrative oversight for MCC work and witness in Africa, starting spring 2001. MCC has programs and about 200 staff in 19 African countries, with a 1999 total budget of $4.6 million.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, email <cdb@mcc.org>, if you are interested in this leadership position. Application review begins Dec. 1, 2000.

- **Rosslyn Academy**, a Christian international day school in Nairobi, Kenya, seeks applicants for the 2001/02 school year. Teaching positions are open at ***elementary, middle and high school levels*** and other openings include ***guidance counselor, administrator and computer specialist***.

  Email Jim Leaman, Superintendent, <JimL@Rosslyn.iconnect.co.ke>, or airmail resume to P.O. Box 14146, Nairobi, Kenya.

- **Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community**, in Virginia's beautiful Shenandoah Valley, seeks ***compassionate caregivers*** who enjoy working with older adults. Join the outstanding nursing team at Oak Lea, a 120-bed nursing home. Full-time and part-time positions available for RNs and LPNs on the evening shift and CNAs on day, evening and night shifts. Low resident-staff ratios, $1 per hour shift differential. Strong benefits package.

  Apply at VMRC, 1501 Virginia Ave., Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 888-564-8672; <www.vmrc.org>. EOE/multiethnic people invited.

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  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, email <cdb@mcc.org>, for more information about this full-time leadership position that opens June 1, 2001. Application review begins Jan. 1, 2001.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is seeking a ***fraternal adviser for Ohio and west Pennsylvania*** to serve as a regional resource person and communication link with congregations, assisting them in using MMA's fraternal programs and accessing other MMA services. Qualified candidates will have strong leadership skills, ability to motivate others, good communication and public speaking skills, an understanding of local church structures and a willingness to travel. MMA offers competitive salary and excellent benefits.

  Send or fax letter of interest and resume to MMA, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264; email <hr@mma-online.org>.

- **Goshen College** is seeking an intellectual and administrative leader to serve as ***academic dean and vice president for academic affairs***. Responsibilities include overseeing the college's academic program and supervising department chairs and Academic Council; administering outcomes assessments, faculty development programs and faculty evaluations; supervising the Mennonite Historical and Good libraries; and advising the provost with respect to academic budget and academic issues. Candidates must be able to articulate their religious beliefs and practices, demonstrate understanding of and commitment to the Mennonite Church and its values and exhibit a history of involvement in a local church congregation. Position begins July 1, 2001; application deadline is Jan. 15, 2001. Goshen College is an EEO/AA employer. Women and minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

  Send inquiries and applications to John D. Yordy, Provost, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; email <provost@goshen.edu>.

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- **Camp Mennoscah** seeks ***administrative directors***: One full-time and one part-time position open Jan. 1, 2001, at the Western District Conference (WDC) camp in south central Kansas. Ability to coordinate and supervise volunteers necessary. Housing provided.

Phone the WDC office, 316-283-6300; or email <wdc@mennowdc.org>, or write to the WDC at P.O. Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117.

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid** is looking for a ***director for the Stewardship Education Center*** to lead MMA's stewardship education efforts in the Anabaptist constituency. Qualifications needed include strong leadership and relational skills with the ability to motivate others, proven management skills, ability to visualize new programs, good communication and public speaking skills, college degree with a master's in Christian ministry preferred. MMA offers competitive salary and excellent benefits.

Send or fax letter of interest and resume to MMA, P.O. Box 483, Goshen, IN 46527; fax 219-533-5264; email <hr@mma-online.org>.

- **Mount Joy Mennonite Church** seeks candidates to fill two or more positions which together will cover four areas of responsibility: ***youth, outreach, pastoral care and Christian education***. There is flexibility in how the positions are configured, offering options of part-time or full-time, if combining several areas of giftedness. When applying, please note the area(s) of responsibility of interest to you and your availability for full-time and/or part-time.

Mail resumes, in confidence, to Allen Heinly, 929 Wood St., Mount Joy, PA 17552, or contact Joe Sherer at 717-653-1528; email <joesherer@paonline.com>.

- **Bluffton College** economics and business administration department invites applications for a tenure track position in ***accounting*** beginning fall 2001. Appointment at assistant or associate level. Master's degree required. CPA and teaching experience preferred. CPA or equivalent required for tenure. Teaching load includes undergraduate courses in Elements of Accounting and Intermediate Accounting, Income Tax Accounting, Auditing, Cost Accounting and Government and Nonprofit Accounting. For more information, see <www.bluffton.edu/acadaffairs/employment.htm>. Review of applications will begin Jan. 15, 2001, and continue until the position is filled.

Send letter of interest, curriculum vitae, three letters of reference and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks the following positions:

Computer information systems: Master's degree required, doctorate preferred. Responsibilities include teaching undergraduate and graduate (if candidate holds a doctorate) courses.

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EMU seeks faculty with evidence or promise of teaching excellence in a Christian, liberal arts environment, committed to ongoing scholarship, who are familiar with and supportive of Anabaptist-Mennonite Christian faith practices. Candidates send letter of application, vitae, transcripts and three references to Marie S. Morris, Undergraduate Academic Dean, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; email <ugdean@emu.edu>. Review will begin Feb. 1, 2001. AAEO employer. Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

- **Bluffton College** seeks candidates for a tenure track position in ***early childhood education*** beginning fall semester 2001. Doctorate (or ABD) with certification in early childhood education (pre-K to grade 3). Certification in reading and/or special education (mild to moderate) preferred. Teach graduate and undergraduate courses in curriculum and instruction in early childhood education, special education and/or reading, and graduate education. Supervise field experiences and student teachers. Rank dependent on qualifications. Consideration of applications begins Jan. 15, 2001, and continues until an appointment is made. For information, see <http://www.bluffton.edu>.

Send letter of interest, vitae, three letters of references and official transcripts to Elaine Suderman, Administrative Assistant for Academic Affairs, Bluffton College, 280 W. College Ave., Bluffton, OH 45817-1196. EOE. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

- **Goshen College** seeks applicants for a half-time position as ***head coach, men's basketball***, beginning July 1, 2001. This half-time position will be combined with additional teaching and/or administrative responsibilities. Strong candidates will have qualifications to teach in an academic discipline other than physical education. Responsibilities include recruiting quality student-athletes within Goshen College and NAIA guidelines; supervising assistant coaches, managers and statisticians; planning, developing, organizing and implementing budgets and schedules. M.A. required with instructional and coaching expertise suitable to the college level. Successful experience in coaching basketball with a desire to build a successful program. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

Please send letter of application, resume and three letters of reference to Paul Keim, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7503; fax 219-535-7060; email <dean@goshen.edu>. We encourage applications through our web site at <www.goshen.edu> under "employment." Goshen College, an affirmative-action employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church. Minority candidates are encouraged to apply.

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J. Lorne Peachey, Editor
October 2000

by Gordon Houser

As the killing continues in Palestine, we witness again the bias of the American media. This is not new, but we need to remind ourselves to question what we read.

All media (including this magazine) operate with certain biases. This is unavoidable. However, if we recognize such leanings, we will gain a better grasp on what is actually going on in the world.

Eduardo Cohen, an American Jew who visited Israel and the West Bank on a fact-finding trip in 1991, writes about such bias in his article "What Americans Need to Know—But Probably Won't Be Told—to Understand Palestinian Rage" (<IIPSALUM@listserve.ne.edu>).

When he returned from his trip, he noted "the gulf between what I had seen and experienced and what the American public perceived through the lens of the American news media." He calls this media "probably the most pro-Israeli in the world. Even the Israeli news media are more critical of the Israeli government than American journalists are."

As an example, he notes that American coverage of this summer's Camp David meetings "followed the Israeli and U.S. government spin that while Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak made courageous concessions for peace, Palestinian unwillingness to compromise caused the meeting to fail."

Yet even the next most pro-Israeli press, that of Great Britain, reported that, "according to documents leaked from Camp David, Arafat reportedly made so many major concessions that they could endanger the possibility of creating a viable Palestinian state."

In the British and European press, Cohen writes, "readers are often reminded that the very existence of Jewish settlements in the West Bank and Gaza is a clear violation of international law." They also read that the "Palestinian demand for full Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, is exactly what is called for in United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which, according to the Oslo Agreement, signed by Israel, is exactly the framework on which final resolution is supposed to be based."

During the latest fighting in Gaza and the West Bank, *Time* and *Newsweek* have run interviews with Israeli leaders, including Ariel Sharon, who was held responsible, even by the Israeli Knesset, for the massacre of 1,000 to 2,000 unarmed Palestinian men, women and children in the Palestinian refugee camps of Sabra and Chatila in Lebanon. Yet neither magazine ran interviews with a Palestinian leader.

If you read the daily reports from Christian Peacemaker Teams workers based in Hebron, you get a different picture from the American media of what is happening on the ground there. For example, they carefully document numerous instances of Israeli soldiers firing on Palestinian homes without provocation, while the official Israeli line is that soldiers only fire in response to attacks.

Given the major role the United States plays in life and death issues in the Middle East, Cohen writes, "American editors and reporters have a special responsibility to ... examine the fairness of their reporting and how critically they examine information they present to the American people." Further, he writes, "they need to examine the possibility of their own racism and begin treating Palestinians and other Arabs as equal citizens whose lives carry just as much value as Jewish Israeli lives."

Judge carefully what you read.

books

New books using the daily office, or fixed-hour prayer, keep coming out. Among some recent resources are *The Divine Hours: Prayers for Summertime* and *The Divine Hours: Prayers for Autumn and Wintertime* by Phyllis Tickle (Doubleday, 2000, $27.50 each). Tickle has reworked the sixth-century Benedictine divine office and incorporated quotations from *The Book of Common Prayer*, *The New Jerusalem Bible* and writings of the church fathers.

Two other recent books are *Venite: A Book of Daily Prayer* by Robert Benson (Putnam, 2000, $24.95) and *Celtic Benediction: Morning and Night Prayer* by J. Philip Newell (Eerdmans, 2000, $16). *Venite* is an ecumenical guide divided into seven parts: the Office, the Seasons, the Remembrances, the Canticles, the Psalter, the Lectio, the Prayers. It also includes a liturgical calendar, a glossary and an index. *Celtic Benediction* draws on the Celtic tradition and focuses its week of prayers on the creation story in Geneis. This brief book is beautifully illustrated and designed.

videos

***The Cup* (G) is a Tibetan film about Buddhist monks in exile in India. Obsessed with soccer, one young monk tries to get his superiors to let them watch the World Cup on TV. This charming film helps humanize people often portrayed in romantic or exotic terms.**

films

Two new films with a shared obsession with dance are *Billy Elliot* (R) and *Dancer in the Dark* (R). In the former, an 11-year-old boy from a poor neighborhood in a northern England mining town gets interested in ballet, to the dismay of his father and older brother, who are on strike and pelting scabs with eggs. Beyond a few brilliant scenes, the story is familiar. Nevertheless Billy (Jamie Bell) is an arresting character. This film moved me like few have in recent years.

The latter film is not your run-of-the-mill movie. Director Lars von Trier has made another provocative work, with his characteristic hand-held camera. Icelandic vocalist Björk plays Selma, a Czech immigrant in Washington state in 1964 who is going blind. Her obsession with Hollywood musicals keeps her going. She is a holy innocent, to whom bad things happen. Both delightful and disturbing, the film plays with religious themes, though they feel tacked on at the end.

***Unbreakable* (PG-13) is similar in tone to director M. Night Shyamalan's *The Sixth Sense* but not as well done. Still, it is captivating and, like the previous film, has a strong moral sense.**

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Everett J. Thomas

God gave us this government?

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God.—Romans 13:1

I do not recall ever hearing a sermon about this verse in a Mennonite worship service. The first seven verses of Romans 13 are never listed among the Scriptures suggested for each Sunday by the *Revised Common Lectionary.* But with a contentious presidential election nearing an end, we might do well to hear the apostle Paul's admonition as a word for this day.

With the results of the election in dispute and lingering court proceedings ahead, now may be the time for Mennonites to help make peace. Unless we have become completely assimilated into the political process, our two-kingdom tradition may enable us to help bring reconciliation to those who are torn by the partisan struggles of an improbably close election.

There are some simple ways we can be peacemakers in the midst of this crisis. In conversations with friends and family, we can sow seeds of peace and reconciliation rather than adding to the national anger. As the legal wrangling continues, we can pray for those making decisions and then let others know that we are offering prayers rather than derision for the process.

If we are a people of a third way that is neither Democrat nor Republican, then Paul's admonition assures us that God can sort it all out.

If we are a people of a third way that is neither Democrat nor Republican, then Paul's admonition assures us that God can sort it all out. Many of us have deep passions for the candidate and party we claim; we are sure that God would want the president of our choice because of his platform or values. But identifying too closely with party politics leaves us unequally yoked to the world.

Conventional wisdom has it that Mennonites in the United States vote pretty much like their neighbors who are not Mennonite. If this is true, then our denomination is split along party lines. It means that some of us are glad for the election results while others of us are unhappy. Few of us, we hope, are pleased by the dissension and polarity created by this mess.

For a people of the Word, however, Romans 13:1 invites us to take a step back. This text and the following six verses suggest that God gave us the electoral college system and the people who are currently in power. Furthermore, we are instructed to be subject to this current government. Even more difficult is the declaration that the present authorities exist because God ordained them.

It is possible, of course, to say that this text does not apply to us or to the U.S. government. The argument here is that Paul was writing to new Christians about the Roman government and that it would be inappropriate to apply this text to our situation. Maybe.

Another line of reasoning calls us to reject this passage because of the way it was abused in the past. Scholars point out that such a passage has been used by governments to ensure blind loyalty from Christian citizens. Hitler, they argue, could use this text to assure German Christians of his legitimacy. The conclusion, then, is that we should ignore this text. Maybe.

Mennonites have an important tradition of challenging government; we need to continue doing so on matters of conscience. The electoral process, however, is not one of them.

It may be difficult to believe that God actually ordained the current structure or had something to do with the creaky old electoral college system in the United States. But it is not difficult to believe that God is bigger than any government and that our perspectives are limited by human nature.

So what can this mean for us and the way we regard the governing authorities in Washington? It means we relax about the outcome. It means we trust the jurisprudence of judges and courts. It means we contribute a word of hope that our country will quickly heal this rift and move on.

Paul ends this section of Romans 13 by instructing us to give "respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due" (v. 7). In the end, such behavior is a hallmark of citizenship in the kingdom of God.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

December 19, 2000

An Iraqi mother and her malnourished child at a hospital in Baghdad

Christmas in Baghdad

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Schoolchildren in Baghdad in front of a statue of Jesus at their school.

6 What kind of Christmas card to send

8 Binational Mennonite Women may change

9 CPT moves to Bethlehem area

16 There's something about Mary

This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Salvation story

Mitchell Brown in “There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy” (Nov. 21), tells of how Rabbi Soloveitchik led him to faith in God. That is a precious story. Nevertheless, the rabbi does not believe that Jesus is the Christ. Brown goes on to say that the rabbi “is exactly where he should be. … He is most certainly ‘saved.’ ” Brown further elaborates that although Jewish people are “stubborn in their disbelief” of the gospel, “somehow these Jews are already saved.” Brown seeks to build this understanding on an exegesis of Romans 11.

In Romans 9, however, Paul writes, “I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit —I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart” (Romans 9:1-2, NRSV). He is referring to the Jewish denial that Jesus is the Christ. In chapter 10, he elaborates, “Brothers and sisters, my heart’s desire and prayer to God for [the Israelites] is that they may be saved” (v. 1).

As I read the Old Testament anticipation of the coming of the Anointed One, it is through him that salvation will extend to Israel and to the ends of the earth. Consistent with that vision of hope, in the New Testament Gospels and epistles I find no suggestion that a person who does not believe that Jesus is the Christ is “exactly where he should be.” Paul’s comments in chapter 11 are a heart cry that Israel will someday return to where they should be, grafted into Christ.—*David W. Shenk, Klaipeda, Lithuania*

I had to smile as I read Brown’s treatment of Romans 11. It took me back to my student days in 1952, when we studied that chapter. I raised some questions to which the professor had no answers. He said, “A fool can ask more questions than a wise man can answer.” That may be true, but allow me to raise some of them again. Was the angel of the Lord mistaken when he told Joseph in Matthew 1:21 that “he will save his people from their sins”? Or was Jesus mistaken when he told Nicodemus, a Jew, in John 3:7, “You must be born again”? Or was Peter mistaken when he told the Jews in Acts 4:12, “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved”?

Brown dismissed Galatians quite easily. If he will study it again carefully, he will find the answers to the questions raised by Romans 11. It tells us there who the true sons of God and Abraham are. No matter how good we are or how faithfully we follow our religion, there is no salvation outside the Lord Jesus Christ. *—Jim Mullet, Guernsey, Sask.*

I appreciate the series on difficult texts of the Bible. Brown’s article came out at a different place from me. In the last five or six years, I have thought a lot about the place of ethnicity in the church. To the article I have two responses. One is based on the words of John the Baptist: If God could raise up descendants of Abraham from stones, Jesus would surely have a head start if he used real people. I feel John the Baptist said that being of Jewish descent had no special value beyond what any other person on the earth might have. So stating that in its negative form, I would say that my being Dutch gives me no hindrance to being a kingdom member.

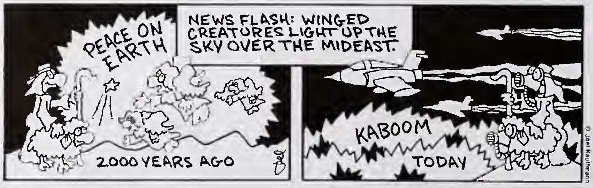
The second point: If we had a letter to the Dutch or any other ethnic group, Paul would have been as positive toward that group as much as he was toward the Jews. Paul showed some public relations finesse. And that doesn’t mean he was wrong in using it. It’s just true with whichever group you choose to address, because ethnicity is not a factor in the new kingdom.—*David Hiebert, Scottdale, Pa.*

The whole story?

My appetite was whetted by “Conference Looks at Genetically Engineered Crops as Farmers, Theologians, Aid Workers Weigh In” (Nov. 21). Did anyone at that conference in Winnipeg voice the concerns that I might expect from an organic farmer or Amish noodlemaker or even a garden-variety environmentalist? Those flavors seemed absent.

Environmentalist writer Peter Montegue says, for instance, that Food and Drug Administration regulations issued in 1992 allow companies such as Monsanto and DuPont to decide whether certain of their own products are safe. Montegue quotes from two internal

Pontius’ Puddle by Joel Kauffmann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y readers say

memos to FDA scientists, recently released during litigation, that seem to contradict certain premises underlying these FDA regulations about the "unintended effects" of genetic modification. (See "Trouble in the Garden," *Prevailing Winds*, Sept.-Dec. 2000.)

Montegue also writes that "it became apparent in 1991 that the public rationale for promoting genetically modified foods—that such foods would 'feed the world'—was based on wishful thinking, not economics." Genetically modified crops are too expensive, he says. I wonder whether this cautionary offering was on the menu at Winnipeg.

If there is to be a dialogue in the church about the merits of genetic modification in our foodstuffs, the competing viewpoints of all segments of the community deserve to be weighed. I came away from the news article only half fed, asking the same questions on the lips of farmer Tony Peters, "Are we getting the whole story?"—*Bruce Liechty, Fresno, Calif.*

Those who have ears

This morning I came to your church. I was warmly greeted at the door, and the ushers found me a comfortable seat. I was happy to join in the singing, and the special music was great. I could clearly hear your amusing introductory story, and I could hear the Scriptures that were read. I tried to follow your train of thought, and then you lowered your voice in emphasis. What you said I'll never know. This went on until I thought you were coming to your final clincher, then you lowered your voice again and it all passed me by. If this is a technique our professors are teaching in our colleges and seminaries, they would perhaps be better employed using their hands in something useful. I really do not know what you had to say this morning.—*Eber Martin, Poland, Ohio*

Cover photo
by Mel Lehman

Christmas in Baghdad

After four days of bombing, then finding welcome in a church, the author encounters a Christmas tree with a haunting message.

Mel Lehman

by Mel Lehman

I spent Christmas 1998 in Baghdad, Iraq. I had been to Iraq twice before in the course of my work as a communications staff person for Church World Service. I had been so shocked by the desperate human conditions I saw—the lack of food and medicines, the thin faces of malnourished children, the raw sewage on the street—that I quit my 20-year career at CWS and went to Iraq for several months to write a book about the situation there.

I arrived during the first week of December and unpacked my suitcases in a hotel overlooking the Tigris River. I was just settling in to work on my book when American bombs exploded outside my hotel just past midnight on Dec. 17. For the first few minutes I lay on my bed in a state of denial, not believing what was happening to me.

The lights in my room suddenly went off, then just as suddenly came back on.

The phone rang. Hassan, the night front desk clerk, said, “Mr. Mel, come down to the bomb shelter.” I grabbed my American passport and, with bombs crashing louder and louder all around me, ran down the stairs to the basement. That phone call may well have saved my life. I learned that when bombs are falling around you, the first thing you should do is get away from windows because the flying glass can kill you.

Terrified: I spent the next five hours until dawn in the basement with several Iraqis and one European. I prayed and prayed. I was terrified, but somehow I survived.

After four nights of bombing, the news came that the bombing had ended. It was Sunday, so I went to church, in this case the Evangelical Church of Baghdad, the largest congregation of the small Protestant community in Iraq.

I arrived in late afternoon, before the evening service, and found a small group of men already there. I don’t know what they were thinking, but only a few hours after four nights of American bombing had ended, I imagined they thought I had arrived from another planet. Nevertheless, they offered me a warm welcome and sincere Christian hospitality. Over coffee and cookies they explained with pride that their church had been founded by American Presbyterians in 1865.

A few days later, on Christmas Day, I returned. The sanctuary was packed—300 to 400 people, I estimated. Someone escorted me all the way to the front, directly facing the children’s choir. The kids were great, dressed up in long white robes with splashy red bows tied around their necks, and they sang their hearts out. “Alleluia” never sounded better to me than it did that morning, coming from the mouths of those children.

Next the congregation sang. The first several hymns had Arabic melodies and words. Then they sang “Joy to the World.” The words were in Arabic, but there was no mistaking Lowell Mason’s majestic tune. I did my best to sing along in English, but it was difficult, with the catch in my throat. I’m unexpectedly home for the holidays after all, I thought to myself, home at the Evangelical Church of Baghdad.

There are just under 1 million Christians in Iraq, primarily Chaldean Catholics. Along with services in the churches, Christmas usually receives public recognition there. But that year, because of “the situation,” someone explained to me, public celebrations of Christmas were avoided.

Thus it came as a great surprise and a joy for me a few days after Christmas to see a large tree—unmistakably a Christmas tree—in the middle of the boulevard as I rode along the Tigris River in a taxi. “So Christmas hasn’t been entirely forgotten here after all,” I said.

My companions explained to me that the tree I saw was not a usual Christmas tree. The decorations were pieces of cardboard cut out in the shape of bulbs, and on each was written the name of an Iraqi child who had died because of the sanctions. The trees had been put up in front of each of the several United Nations offices in Baghdad. The Iraqis had chosen this Christian symbol to try to get a message through to the “Christian” West.

Upside-down teardrops: We stopped at one of the trees and walked over to it. There, covering it, were little pieces of cardboard decorations. It struck me that they looked more like

> The tree I saw was not a usual Christmas tree. The decorations were pieces of cardboard cut out in the shape of bulbs, and on each was written the name of an Iraqi child who had died because of the sanctions.

Growing toward baptism

Rui Shogenji comes to church but is waiting for baptism.

by Bethany Swope

On Nov. 7, 1999, nine people gathered for worship at Kitami Mennonite Church, a now 13-year-old congregation on the northern island of Hokkaido in Japan. The seven adults present shared their first impressions of church, Christians and what led them to faith. The congregation worked to answer the questions of its newest participant about the meaning of baptism.

Rui Shogenji

MBM photo by Wayne Gehman

The congregation is a family to each other. "Even the little handful that we are, to gather together and know that we are met by God is a gift … worth any price," says Mary Beyler, a mission worker in Kitami since 1988, appointed by Mennonite Board of Missions and the Commission on Overseas Mission. She has served in Japan since 1974.

In this final story of a four-part series, Rui Shogenji shares his story. A talented graduate student in computer technology, he has only recently discovered Christianity. At church he speaks quietly to his elders, sharing his questions about baptism.

Rui found his way to church by following a sign, just as the magi followed a star centuries before. The entire congregation remembers the first time he walked in the door in February 1998, though he remembers little other than being nervous.

He came because he saw the church sign along the main road. Rui just showed up, not knowing who he would meet or what would happen when he walked inside the doors. The congregation assumed he came with the guest speaker that Sunday, since it is rare in Japan for anyone to come to a church without an invitation.

But he came back the next week and every week after. "I had been reading in books that the possibility of Japanese having no religion seemed strange to foreigners. I felt somehow that having a faith would be an asset," he says.

I felt somehow that having a faith would be an asset.

—Rui Shogenji

He had decided weeks earlier to visit the church, but for several weeks he made excuses for why he was too busy.

"This church is the first one I approached as an adult and came of my own will," he says.

He says he must have gone to a Christian preschool because he vaguely remembers prayers in kindergarten. He attended a church high school in England, where he saw many church buildings. At that school there were chapel services and prayers before meals there, but he never approached those experiences with faith, he says.

As the congregation that Sunday shared the stories of their baptisms, Rui honestly shared his questions. "Before coming, even after coming here, even now, I don't know the importance of baptism," he said. "I'm not sure how to think about it.

"I don't understand why baptism is more important than everything else. The bigger step for me was coming here in the first place. Can there be anything more important than coming here for the first time? I haven't ever seen someone before and after baptism. I haven't seen the process, so I don't know what changes."

He wants to learn more, and plans to continue worshiping and praying with the Kitami congregation.

Bethany Swope is a writer for Mennonite Board of Missions.

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upside-down teardrops than bulbs. My companion translated what was written on one of them, and it seemed appropriate for me to take it. I've brought it all the way back home with me to New York City, and it is here next to my computer as I write. On the one side is written: Rishanah Hamed Abadi, 15 months, 1995, and on the other side: Mohammed Zeidan Khalifah, 2 days, 1994.

Of course even one name on that tree is too many, but if all the names of the Iraqi children who died because of the sanctions were placed on that tree, it would have collapsed. UNICEF puts that number at a half million, and the Iraqis put it at 1.3 million.

This Christmas I pray that our country will lift the economic sanctions on Iraq and that the Iraqis will no longer need to add the names of their children to that tree.

Mel Lehman, a member of Manhattan (N.Y.) Mennonite Fellowship, is writing a book about the impact of economic sanctions on Iraq. He has visited Iraq four times over the past four years.

What kind of Christmas card to send

A call to use Christmas cards with truly biblical content

by Kenneth L. Gibble

I can never quite decide if the tradition of sending Christmas greetings is mostly a blessing or a headache. If you send even one Christmas card, you have to decide what kind of card to send. Maybe you do as I have sometimes done—buy a box of secular cards to send to your nonreligious friends and a box of religious cards to send to your friends who share your faith tradition.

On my visit to the local Hallmark store I decided to examine the nonreligious cards first, noting that their display took up twice as many shelves as the religious cards. The secular cards had artwork with lots of winter scenes, wreaths, evergreen trees. They contained messages such as these: "With best wishes for the holidays and the coming year," "Greetings of the season and best wishes for the new year," "May the warmth of the holiday season fill your home with happiness." One card that came dangerously close to a religious theme had a picture of an angel lovingly holding the earth in its hands and the message, "Let us love the world to peace." Kinda cute. Another contained a smiling snowman on the outside and the words "Jolly Holidays" on the inside.

All very nice, warm sentiments guaranteed not to offend anyone, be the recipient Gentile or Jew, Hindu or Buddhist, Jerry Falwell or the mysteriously missing Madelyn Murray O'Hair.

What about the cards in the religious section? As I expected, the artwork and graphics here were all in extremely good taste. After all, this was Hallmark, sponsor of the high-quality "Hallmark Hall of Fame" TV specials.

Here were artistic renderings of cherubs playing musical instruments with the words, "Sometimes, if we listen, we can almost hear the angels." Here, on card after card, were the wise men bearing their gifts, scenes of that little town of Bethlehem, angels singing anthems, and an occasional mother holding child. This year, at least, shepherds seemed to be out of fashion. The sentiments expressed in words did have at least a slightly more religious flavor than did the cards in the nonreligious section. A few of them actually mentioned "God," as in "God bless you in this joyous season."

Buyers who preferred religious cards could choose from among 50 different offerings. Among those 50, I found one that had the word "Jesus" and two that had the word "Christ." There was but one Bible verse quoted among the 50 cards, and it was from the Old Testament. To be fair, there were a few cards that used the word "Savior" and a few that contained the phrase "his birth."

Apparently Hallmark has decided that good taste at Christmastime means downplaying all that Jesus stuff. Hallmark, after all, has been in the business long enough to know what sells.

In 1994, I enjoyed reading one of William Raspberry's columns ("Christmas Without Meaning?" in *The Washington Post*) in which he wrote about receiving a Christmas card from a friend that read: "I sincerely wish that you may enjoy the holiday and/or celebration of your religious, ethnic or sociopolitical choice over the coming weeks whenever it/they may fall and whatever it/they may be so named."

Antireligious bias: Raspberry said at first he thought the card was funny. But when he reflected on it, he wasn't so sure it was funny after all. He writes, "Friends who used to give you a hearty 'Merry Christmas!' now offer a generic 'Seasons Greetings' or, if they're super careful, 'Have a good one.'" Asks Raspberry, "Is it not just possible that antireligious bias masquerading as religious neutrality is costing more than we have been willing to acknowledge?"

Those are good questions about what the religious holiday called Christmas has become in our society, questions that have special relevance to those of us for whom Christmas is not merely a season of generic good cheer, not merely a holiday, but a holy day.

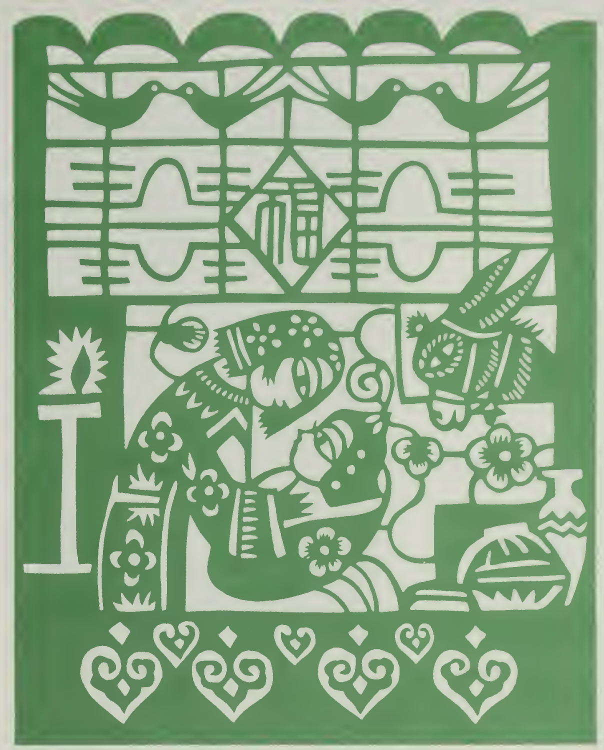
There is nothing generic about the Bible's account of the first Christmas. Luke the Gospel writer tells about a particular event that began with a particular woman named Mary who is pregnant and not married. In the time and place Mary lived, bearing a child out of wedlock was a horrible disgrace. How will Joseph, her fiance, react when she breaks the news to him? Will he end the engagement, hold her up to ridicule and shame? And what will Mary's cousin Elizabeth, the wife of a priest, say when she finds out?

Mary arrives at the home of Elizabeth. Just by looking at Mary, Elizabeth grasps the situation. And Elizabeth cries out, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." Mary is welcomed with open arms. And then Mary breaks into song.

"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

Among 50 religious Christmas cards, I found one that had the word "Jesus" and two that had the word "Christ." There was but one Bible verse quoted among the 50 cards, and it was from the Old Testament.

This illustration of the nativity comes from Nanjing Theological Seminary in Nanjing, China.



Mary's song spells out what God is doing in the world: the powerful brought low, the lowly lifted up, the hungry fed, the rich sent away empty. This is religious faith translated into a vision of social justice. Later, when Luke gives us the details of the son born to Mary, we understand what this birth means. It means that God chooses to come to the world, not as a prince born to a royal family living in a grand palace but as a child born to a peasant woman who must bear her child in a cattle shed. Salvation arrives in the most unlikely ways and places.

All the lovely Christmas cards to the contrary, there was nothing especially beautiful about the first Christmas. The Savior of the world was born to Mary and Joseph, alone and afraid in a strange village. It was Mary's first child. No other woman was there to help her through the birthing—no female relative, not even a midwife. The shepherds may have heard the angels singing that night; there is no evidence that Mary and Joseph heard them.

That's what Christmas means—God coming to us in a way we never could have predicted, in a way that confounds every human expectation, in a way that threatens the status quo. For after this night, nothing will ever be the same.

There are those who, with the eyes of faith, can see what God was up to in that Bethlehem stable. To them—to us—it is good news of great joy. It is why the angels sang that night. It is why we celebrate Christmas with the music of gladness.

Genuine smiles: Why should we soft-pedal our joy by wishing our neighbors, "Happy holidays"? If your co-worker or friend is Jewish, surely you can extend greetings for a joyous Hannukah. If you have Muslim acquaintances, wish them appropriate greetings on their holy days. But as we approach our own holy day, I urge all of us to stop stifling our joy. Let us say "Merry Christmas" to those we meet and say it with genuine smiles on our faces.

It is disabling for faith to fear what someone will think, to project that fear into an assumption. What if Jesus had worried that people might find his message not quite appropriate, not tasteful enough? Would he have watered down his message? Sweetened it? If so, those spiritually needy people in Jesus' day would have heard either a falsely soothing message, a cheerful "have-a-nice-day" or a message so inoffensively generic that they would have forgotten it within minutes.

You do not honor someone else's religious convictions by hiding your own.

What kind of Christmas card to send? You may have to search a bit for one that says what you want to say. Maybe you can find the kind that are blank inside and write your own greeting. But whatever greeting you send, try to get something in there about the birth of Jesus, the One we call Lord, Savior, Prince of Peace. Have your message express the good news of great joy that his coming represents.

Throw out all those innocuous cards with cute snowmen and sweet reindeer and silver bells. Oh, keep a Santa Claus or two for the children if you must. At least historically, he was a Christian saint. But forget the rest. There are plenty of people to send them, people for whom Christmas is little more than a round of parties and a stack of gifts that will have to be exchanged later.

You say it's too late, you've already sent out all your cards? Then go through the cards you've received and pick out the ones that say it best. Hang them up where you can see them in the coming days. And next year when you buy your Christmas cards …

Kenneth L. Gibble is a member of the Church of the Brethren and lives in Chambersburg, Pa.

It is disabling for faith to fear what someone will think, to project that fear into an assumption. What if Jesus had worried that people might find his message not quite appropriate, not tasteful enough?

Mennonite Women's binational future in question following decisions by board and Canada church

NEWTON, Kan.—Following the direction set by the new Mennonite Church, Mennonite Women is grappling with structural issues dictated by the U.S.-Canadian border.

The binational Mennonite Women board of directors has begun exploring the creation of a two-country structure with an emphasis on binational partnerships. The decision, made by the Mennonite Women board at its Oct. 26-28 meeting in Newton, could result in the formation of a U.S. women's organization to parallel an existing one in Canada.

Earlier this fall, Mennonite Church Canada stated a preference to relate structurally to Canadian Women in Mission rather than to a binational women's organization. Created by Canadian General Conference Mennonite Church women, Canadian Women in Mission is an association of the five provincial women's groups. There has not been a U.S. GC or Mennonite Church counterpart to Canadian Women in Mission.

Mennonite Women was formed in 1997 by the merger of the GC Women in Mission and the MC Women's Missionary and Service Commission, two binational organizations.

The formation of Mennonite Women as a binational entity reflected the broader denominational direction prior to 1998. Since then, however, the transformation process has led to the creation of country church structures in both the United States and Canada.

"We are glad to see that the relationship between Canadian Women in Mission and Mennonite Church Canada is growing stronger," says Mennonite Women board president Elizabeth Klassen of Kitchener, Ont. "The question is that of parity: Mennonite Church USA wants to relate to Mennonite Women in a fashion parallel to that of Mennonite Church Canada. Mennonite Women leadership will need time to determine what changes in our structures will offer the best relationships with both denominational bodies."

Says Lorna Rogalski, Canadian Women in Mission president and a Mennonite Women board member from Vineland, Ont.: "This will give us more freedom in working with our respective church bodies. … I hope and plan to find ways to continue the mutually beneficial relationship between [Canadian Women in Mission] and Mennonite Women."

This will give us more freedom to work with our respective church bodies.

—Lorna Rogalski

round the corner

all her life she's valued the **questions**
more than the answers
with the last child off to college
she finds her questions **changing**
with all she's achieved
has she become the woman God would have her be?
what is God's will for her now?

she cherishes the **journey**

what joy she would find
in traveling alongside other **Mennonite women**

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Holiday season sees CPT move to Bethlehem area

BETHLEHEM, West Bank—In response to Israeli military attacks on the area around Bethlehem, Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT) has sent two workers to live in the neighboring village of Beit Jala.

Anne Montgomery of New York and Pierre Shantz of Waterloo, Ont., moved to Beit Jala on Dec. 1. Over the next four days, they experienced shelling firsthand as helicopters, tanks and machine guns fired into Bethlehem and Beit Jala from the Israeli settlement of Gilo, two kilometers away. During a Dec. 5 attack, Montgomery took shelter in the CPT apartment bathroom for three hours. One apartment window was blown out. Shantz was not home at the time. But Montgomery talked with the U.S. Consulate by phone during the attack, and the shooting stopped shortly afterward.

Local Palestinian Christian groups urged CPT to establish a presence in the Bethlehem area. CPT workers also remain in Hebron.

Beit Jala, where tradition states that St. Nicholas was born, has been especially vulnerable to attacks from Gilo. Palestinian gunmen, who do not live in the neighborhood, have been firing light weaponry at Gilo. But Amnesty International calls the Israeli counterattacks with tanks and missiles "grossly excessive."

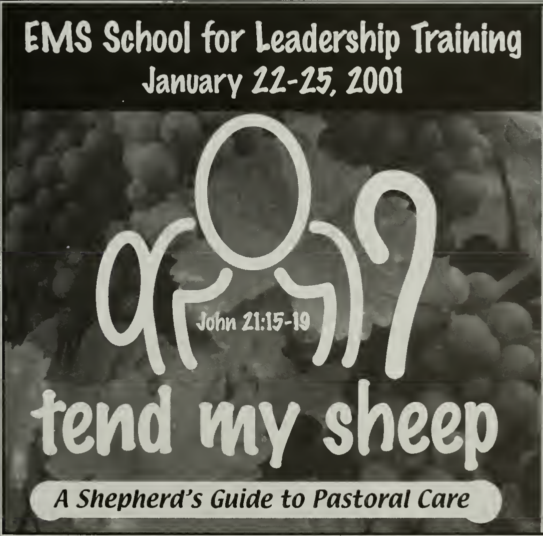
The tourism industry, central to Bethlehem's economy, has disappeared since the fighting began. The city has canceled this year's Christmas celebrations.—*CPT News Service*

25 years
MCC-L

MCC photo by Edgar Metzler

Anniversary dance

Dancers perform in traditional dress Nov. 3 at the 25th anniversary celebration of Mennonite Central Committee work in Laos. The celebration, held in the capital city of Vientiane, included worker reflections, indigenous music and a puppet show about MCC's work removing unexploded cluster bombs.



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Gathering draws conference ministers

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Mennonites must encourage young people to consider pastoral ministry and must pay close attention to the "care and feeding" of current pastors, a consultant told an annual gathering of conference ministers Nov. 29-Dec. 2 in Harrisonburg.

The Conference Ministers Retreat brought together representatives from 27 area conferences of the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC), Mennonite Church (MC) and Mennonite Church Canada. Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg and Virginia Conference hosted the event, which also included participants from church schools and agencies.

Michael Wiese, a marketing professor at Church of God-affiliated Anderson (Ind.) University, reported on initial findings from the second phase of the Samuel Project, a GC-MC study exploring U.S. and Canadian attitudes about pastoral ministry and how future leaders can be developed.

In the project's first phase, Wiese surveyed high school students, young adults, people who have participated in the Ministry Inquiry Program and students in seminaries and ministry inquiry programs. The second phase included a survey of current pastors, parents of high school students and people preparing for ministry as a second career after working in another vocation.

Wiese said people in each of the phase groups agree that pastors are content, respected and treated favorably. At the same time, he said, young people recognize that pastoral ministry involves long hours, high expectations and less money than other professions.

"I think that when they look at being a pastor, they perceive that they are giving up too much," Wiese said.

While most pastors report positive experiences, "there are some sad stories," Wiese said. Bad experiences in the pastorate not only damage ministers, spouses and children but harm congregations and "pollute the stream of future pastors," he said in a written summary. "This study underlines the importance of the 'care and feeding' of our pastors."

"Not everyone is supposed to be a minister," Wiese said. But at the same time, he said, young people need to be encouraged to consider if God is calling them to the pastorate.

"When something is important, we become intentional about it," he said. "If the development of leadership is important, make it intentional."

Wiese also noted, "Often the seed to consider the ministry is planted in youth but does not blossom until mid-career." Personal support, flexible educational options and, in some cases, financial assistance are important to people who are considering pastoral ministry as a second career, he said.—*David E. Graybill*

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Mongolians see faith through housing

ELKHART, Ind.—Putting faith into action has gained Christian workers in Mongolia new respect—and given two families new homes.

Habitat for Humanity, Joint Christian Services International and World Vision collaborated to build two new homes in Mongolia in September and October, impressing the Mongolians who benefited from the project.

"One grandfather said he could tell we were different from the religious Buddhists he knew, because while they talked a lot about their religion, they didn't take much action," says Marlow Ramsay, who helped with the project. He works with Habitat under joint appointment of the Commission on Overseas Mission and Mennonite Board of Missions.

The new homes on the east side of Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia's capital, were dedicated on Oct. 27. Habitat presented each family with a certificate, a Bible and the keys to the house. In return, the Mongolian hosts gave a traditional celebration feast of potato salad, cabbage salad, steamed sheep's back and plenty of "airag" (fermented mare's milk). They also sang songs to commemorate the event.

The homes were the first built by Habitat in Mongolia. Families were selected in August, and work on the houses began Sept. 1. The homes consist of a large living room, a bedroom and a kitchen.

Habitat built the homes using traditional Mongolian methods and materials. The main structure of each house was framed with squared-off logs, similar to a log cabin, then faced with brick. In the absence of fiberglass insulation, the logs act as the needed barrier to the elements—an important factor in Mongolia, where the average winter temperature drops to 13 degrees below zero.

The homes cost the equivalent of $2,450 each. The families will pay for their homes at a rate of $25 per month.

One family's previous home was a moth-eaten "ger," a traditional canvas shelter with felt insulation, which housed all eight family members. The other family had lived with relatives, with 14 people living in one house.

The two families were selected from 14 applicants. To meet the selection criteria, the families had to earn at least $15 of family income per person per month, have a minimum of six family members with at least three of them children, be able to help work on the houses and demonstrate significant need.

Because of the severe Mongolian winters, Habitat will wait until spring to build more homes.—*Gary Kauffman for MBM News Service*

MWC team visits 2003 assembly site in Zimbabwe

BULAWAYO, Zimbabwe—Mennonite World Conference executive secretary Larry Miller and Ray Brubacher, MWC director of special projects, returned last month from a visit to Bulawayo, the site of the 2003 MWC Assembly. While there they visited local Brethren in Christ leaders, travel and hotel officials and the facilities for the assembly.—*MWC News Service*

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by the way ...

On revenue of $5.4 million last year, MEDA turned a $284,000 profit.—*Vancouver Sun*

Federal prisoner receives stay of execution

WASHINGTON—President Clinton has again delayed the execution of Juan Raul Garza, who was scheduled on Dec. 12 to be the first federal prisoner put to death in nearly 40 years.

Garza, the former son-in-law of Mennonite pastor Conrado Hinojosa, has received support from various Mennonite agencies, including Mennonite Board of Missions, Mennonite Church General Board and Mennonite Central Committee.

Garza is convicted of three drug-related killings. In staying Garza's execution until June 2001, Clinton cited a study that found that racial minorities and people from certain geographic regions are "disproportionately represented" in federal death-penalty cases. "I am not satisfied that, given the uncertainty that exists, it is appropriate to go forward with an execution in a case that may implicate the very issues at the center of that uncertainty," the president said in a statement.

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MBCM calls new minister of youth

ELKHART, Ind.—Steve Ropp, youth minister for western Central District and Illinois conferences, has been named minister of youth by Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries (MBCM). He will begin the half-time position on Feb. 1, 2001.

Ropp will work from his home in Bloomington, Ill. He is a member of the Mennonite Church of Normal (Ill.).

"It is humbling to be called to such a ministry," Ropp says. "I look forward to working with conferences and congregations in guiding and directing youth ministry for the denomination."

Ropp succeeds Carlos Romero, who left the MBCM minister of youth position in August 1999. Ropp will work with Abe Bergen, who carries youth ministry responsibilities for the Commission on Education.—*MBCM News Service*

MPH editor, administrator retiring after 41 years

SCOTTDALE, Pa.—Paul Schrock will retire at the end of the year, completing 41 years of service at Mennonite Publishing House. His tenure included serving as editor of Herald Press Trade Books from 1972 to 1988. During that time he edited well-known books such as *More-With-Less Cookbook* by Doris Janzen Longacre and *The Upside-Down Kingdom* by Donald Kraybill. Since 1988 until this past summer, he had been director of Herald Press Trade Books.

Schrock started work at Mennonite Publishing House in 1959 as an assistant editor to Paul Erb, who was then editor of *Gospel Herald* and a book editor. Schrock also edited *Builder* and *Words of Cheer,* and in 1968 he became founding editor of *Purpose.*

Births

Blosser, Samuel Luke, Nov. 15, to Joann (Lehman) and Kevin Blosser, Lindale, Texas.

Branscom, Lacie Kathryn, Nov. 13, to Angela and Steve Branscom, Hutchinson, Kan.

Goshow, David Ryan, Nov. 30, to Clarke and Mary (Posen) Goshow, Harleysville, Pa.

Hancock, Elizabeth Grace, Nov. 28, to Carol (Flaming) and Richard Hancock, Wichita, Kan.

Knightly, Sophia Cassel, Nov. 27, to Cynthia Cassel and Jeffrey Knightly, Philadelphia.

Reinford, Micah Jed, Nov. 23, to Carl and Gloria (Nissley) Reinford, Middleburg, Pa.

Snyder, Kaitlyn Rose, Nov. 13, to Leon and Wendy (Derstine) Snyder, Fleetwood, Pa.

Marriages

Arteno/Sommers: Cheryl Arteno, Uniontown, Ohio, and Mike Sommers, Nov. 26, at Hartville (Ohio) Mennonite Church.

Burkholder/Collier: Susan Burkholder, Bluffton, Ohio, and Everett Collier, Bluffton, Oct. 21, at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

McAloose/Yoder: Gene McAloose, Harrisburg, Pa., and Lucy Yoder, Harrisburg, Oct. 21, at Grantham (Pa.) Brethren in Christ Church.

Miller/Robich: DeLisa Miller, Hutchinson, Kan., and Rich Robich, Athens, Ga., Nov. 25, at South Hutchinson (Kan.) Mennonite Church.

Schroyer/Yoder: Deanna Schroyer, Friendsville, Md., and Richard Yoder, Springs, Pa., Nov. 11 at Springs Mennonite Church.

Deaths

Clemens, Melvin, 88, Bluffton, Ohio, died Nov. 25. Spouse: Dorothy Ruth Clemens. Parents: Jacob and Elizabeth Clemens (deceased). Other survivors: children Elizabeth Martinson, Stan, Louise Lehman; eight grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Memorial service: Dec. 2 at First Mennonite Church, Bluffton.

Dully, Dean, 71, Metamora, Ill., died Nov. 11. Spouse: Doris Felker Dully. Parents: George and Lena Tuffentsamer Dully (deceased). Other survivors: children Michael, Christine Underwood; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 14 at Groveland, Ill.

Friesen, Winifred Bennetts, 86, Reedley, Calif., died Nov. 21 of Alzheimer's disease. Spouse: Alvin Friesen. Parents: Charles and Mae Bennetts (deceased). Other survivors: children Don, Barbara Roupp; five grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 27 at First Mennonite Church, Reedley.

Harnish, Elta Metzler, 89, Lancaster, Pa., died Nov. 22 of congestive heart failure. Spouse: Jacob Harnish (deceased). Parents: Harvey and Katie Metzler (deceased). Survivors: children Jacob, Robert, Dennis, Mary Jane Gerlach, Ruth Hertzler, Joanne Forry; 13 grandchildren; four great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 26 at Erisman Mennonite Church, Manheim, Pa.

Kreider, Vivien, 87, Lititz, Pa., died Nov. 16. Parents: John and Lillie Good Kreider Zook (deceased). Graveside service: Nov. 18 at Mellinger Mennonite Cemetery, Lancaster, Pa.

Leichty, Samilda, 84, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 10. Parents: Daniel and Alma Yoder Leichty (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 13 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Miller, Paul, 87, Sarasota, Fla., died Nov. 10. Spouse: Grace Metzler Miller. Other survivors: children Ed, Carl, Helen Lamman; two grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 15 at Bay Shore Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

Roth, Susan Marner, 79, Milford, Neb., died Nov. 17 of a brain hemorrhage. Spouse: Ezra Roth (deceased). Parents: Eli and Lizzie Marner (deceased). Survivors: children Clifford, Lonnie, Doretta Schweitzer, Imagene Burkey, Julie Hafer; 21 grandchildren; 30 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 21 at Bellwood Mennonite Church, Milford.

Sauder, Lela Sauder, 87, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 22 of cancer. Spouse: Melvin Sauder. Parents: Emmanuel and Cora Baer Sauder (deceased). Other survivors: children Gene, Danelda Brenneman, Barbara Spiess; eight grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 25 at Central Mennonite Church, Archbold.

Schloneger, Vera, 66, Orrville, Ohio, died Nov. 11 of multiple myeloma. Parents: Reuben and Mabel Amstutz Schloneger (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 15 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, North Lawrence, Ohio.

Singer, Clyde, 95, Dalton, Ohio, died Nov. 14 of cancer. Spouse: (1st) Bertha Baker Singer (deceased); (2nd) Sera Jane Vance Singer (deceased); (3rd) Louise Vance Singer (deceased). Parents: Levi and Pearly Martin Singer (deceased). Survivors: children Kenneth, Dale, Paul, Harry, Viola Smith; 14 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 17 at Pleasant View Mennonite Church, North Lawrence, Ohio.

Snader, Daniel, 83, Lititz, Pa., died Nov. 21 of cancer. Spouse: Elmira Snader. Parents: Daniel and Sarah Crouse Snader (deceased). Other survivors: children Miriam Musser, Joyce Weber, Dorothy, Darlene Sandoe, Daniel, Charles; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 25 at East Chestnut Street Mennonite Church, Lancaster, Pa.

Stutzman, Sylvia Wittmer, 100, Sarasota, Fla., died Nov. 25. Spouse: Enos Stutzman (deceased). Parents Daniel and Caroline Stucky Wittmer (deceased). Survivors: children Pauline Cutrell, Dorothy Cutrell, Evelyn Bird; six grandchildren; four great-grandchildren; two great-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 29 at Ashton Mennonite Church, Sarasota.

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Advertising space in *The Mennonite* is available to congregations, conferences, businesses, and churchwide boards and agencies. Cost for one-time classified placement is $1.10 per word, minimum of $30. Display space is also available. To place an ad in *The Mennonite*, call 800-790-2498 and ask for Melanie Mueller.

- **Freeman Academy**, Freeman, S.D., grades 5-12, seeks full-time ***admissions recruiter***. Base pay $15,000 plus $500 per student. Contact 605-925-4237; fax 605-925-4271.

- **Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church** seeks a half-time ***associate/youth pastor***. Send resume by Dec. 31 to Search Committee, Lorraine Avenue Mennonite Church, 655 S. Lorraine, Wichita, KS 67211-3093; email <lamcpastor@prodigy.net>.

- **Explore English teaching opportunities in Asia** with our partner churches in Japan, Hong Kong and Korea, or in China with China Educational Exchange.

  Contact Commission on Overseas Mission, <com@gcmc.org>, or Mennonite Board of Missions, <info@mbm.org>.

- **Mount Vernon Mennonite Church**, Kirkwood, Pa., is seeking a full-time ***lead pastor*** with a strong commitment to biblical preaching and a vision to reach the community for Christ.

  Contact John Beitler, 717-529-6071; email <mtvernonmennonite@juno.com>.

- **Eden Mennonite Church**, Moundridge, Kan., is seeking a full-time ***associate pastor*** willing to work with youth and in team ministry. Position available summer 2001. See our web site at <http://homepage.netspaceonline.com/~edenmc/church.html>

  Send resume to Jay Goering, 2002 Arrowhead Rd., Moundridge, KS 67107; email <mpaajay@yahoo.com>.

- **Central Plains Mennonite Conference** seeks people for the following positions: ***conference minister, central treasurer, executive secretary*** and ***missions minister***.

  Send MLI/resume and letter of interest by Jan. 15, 2001, to CPMC, Box 101, Freeman, SD 57029; fax 605-925-7293. For more information, contact Sharon Waltner, 605-648-3224; <kwaltmin@gwtc.net>.

- **Camp Mennoscah** seeks ***administrative directors***: One full-time and one part-time position open Jan. 1, 2001, at the Western District Conference (WDC) camp in south central Kansas. Ability to coordinate and supervise volunteers necessary. Housing provided.

  Phone the WDC office, 316-283-6300; or email <wdc@mennowdc.org>, or write to the WDC at P.O. Box 306, North Newton, KS 67117.

- **Wildwood Mennonite Church**, Saskatoon, 25 years old with an average attendance of 145, 75% under age 45, seeks ***pastoral leadership***. We express a strong Anabaptist tradition, embrace intergenerational worship and fellowship, and have a staffed youth program. This position could be filled by more than one person.

  Please send resumes to Brenda MacDonald, 1617 Sommerfeld Ave., Saskatoon, SK S7H 2S5; <bgjkw.macd@sk.sympatico.ca>.

- **First Mennonite Church**, Kitchener, Ont., an intergenerational, vibrant, culturally diverse (Anglo and Hispanic), urban congregation of 400 members, is seeking a full-time ***pastor*** beginning Sept. 1, 2001, with a focus on preaching and worship, pastoral care, teaching and administration. The pastor will provide leadership working within the team model of ministry as a co-pastor and colleague.

  Please respond by Jan. 15, 2001, to Muriel Bechtel, Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, 4489 King St. E., Kitchener, ON N2P 2G2.

- **Africa knowledge, experience and vision?** Administrative expertise? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for an ***Africa co-director*** to share administrative oversight for MCC work and witness in Africa, starting spring 2001. MCC has programs and about 200 staff in 19 African countries, with a 1999 total budget of $4.6 million.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, email <cdb@mcc.org>, if you are interested in this leadership position. Application review begins Dec. 1, 2000.

- **Commitment to voluntary service?** Experience in administration, counseling and voluntary service unit life? Mennonite Central Committee is looking for a ***coordinator for Lancaster County Service Program***, which includes 30+ volunteers from Canada, Brazil, Germany, United States, Switzerland and South Africa who work at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pa.

  Contact Charmayne Brubaker, 717-859-1151, email <cdb@mcc.org>, for more information about this full-time leadership position that opens June 1, 2001. Application review begins Jan. 1, 2001.

- **Dyck Arboretum of the Plains**, a 19-year-old, 13-acre arboretum located in Hesston, Kan., with programmatic focus on native and adaptable prairie plants, seeks a full-time ***executive officer***. Reporting to the board of trustees, the executive director has responsibility for entire arboretum operation, including horticultural operations and planning, long-range planning, fund raising and grant writing, educational programming and administrative functions. New 18-acre "Prairie Window" project will be a primary focus in the first three years of the new director's employment. Salary commensurate with responsibilities and experience.

  Please direct inquiries and/or resume materials by Jan. 15, 2001, to Duane Graham, Chair, Search Committee, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-325-4192. For more information, visit <www.hesston.edu/arbor/execdir.htm>.

- **Goshen College** is seeking an ***executive vice president for mission advancement*** to promote the college's mission and vision. The successful candidate will exhibit integrity and the ability to collaborate and be successful in a highly competitive higher education environment. Responsibilities include designing an integrated marketing plan that includes best practices in enrollment management strategies. The executive vice president for mission advancement will provide critical coordination among enrollment, marketing, public relations, student life, constituency relations and development areas. Candidates must combine exceptional vision with marketing and analytical skills, become invested in recruitment management and retention monitoring, understand the college's audiences, and work effectively with college leadership, faculty, staff and students. Must be able to imagine this job as a calling because of deep commitment to Christian faith, the Mennonite Church and the vibrant learning community of Goshen College. Preferred starting date is July 1, 2001 (or sooner if available); application deadline is Jan. 15, 2001. Goshen College, an EEO/AA employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

  Send nominations, inquiries and applications to Shirley H. Showalter, President, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7501; fax 219-535-7060; email <shirleyhs@goshen.edu>.

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Time to end Iraqi economic sanctions (a parable)

by David E. Ortman

After visiting the United States in September, a delegation of Iraqi peace clergy declared, "Our oil sanctions are the economic nuclear bomb." Aug. 6, 2000, marked 10 years since economic sanctions were imposed on the United States by Iraq in the form of drastically cutting back crude oil shipments. "We are destroying an entire society. It is as simple and terrifying as that," the clergy said.

The Iraqi oil sanctions have sapped the morale of the American people. Projections are that high heating-oil prices will leave many poor and elderly people, particularly in the northeastern part of the country, with no way to heat their homes. High gasoline prices are beginning to force even the wealthy to turn away from their beloved SUVs. The sanctions have accelerated the United States' crumbling infrastructure. Roads, highways, bridges and especially the railroad system and public transportation are all literally falling apart.

"The United States will take decades to recover from just transportation impacts alone," predicted one Iraqi observer.

Despite the supposed booming economy in the United States, more than one in 10 Americans still suffer from hunger. Members of the U.S. Congress remain bewildered and afraid to act. A bill to make improvements in the food stamp program would ease the burden for a large number of these Americans. While the bill has been gaining support in Congress, the legislative year is quickly winding down and many advocates are concerned that this legislation will not be given priority.

An Iraqi peace activist who visited the United States 10 times in the last five years said that the discernible difference in his last visit was a profound loss of hope among the American people. The United States remains in the control of the corporate elite that benefits from the production of weapons of mass destruction.

Meanwhile, the Iraqi government maintains that economic sanctions on the United States must stay in place until the United States cooperates with the United Nations on the issue of weapons of mass destruction. They allege that the United States continues to hide its nuclear secrets. It imprisoned Wen Ho Lee, a Taiwan-born scientist who worked at the Los Alamos, N.M., weapons lab, for nine months in solitary confinement, under just the suspicion that Lee had passed along "classified material" to the international community.

The Iraqi government also charges that the United States refuses to acknowledge the presence of weapons of mass destruction or to allow United Nations weapons inspectors access to military bases. In August, citizens in Seattle protested the presence of the U.S.S. Ohio, a U.S. Navy Trident submarine, which can carry ICBM missiles with hundreds of independently targetable nuclear warheads, each equivalent to 1,000 times the destructiveness of the weapon used by the United States to destroy Hiroshima, Japan. However, the U.S. Navy refused to answer any questions from its own citizens concerning whether nuclear weapons were being brought into one of the largest cities on the U.S. West Coast.

According to reports on file with the United Nations Special Session on Disarmament, the United States continues its relentless replacement of C-4 Trident missiles with the more powerful D-5 upgrade, in order to achieve a more accurate first-strike capability.

"The United States is different from all other countries," said one high-ranking Iraqi official. "The United States is the only country that has actually used nuclear weapons on another country. And the United States clings to the right to use nuclear weapons in a first-strike attack. We are not talking about theory here or possible future behavior. We know what they have done in the past."

In fact, the Iraq government still stands behind its policy supporting the removal of the president of the United States as a war criminal, by covert action if necessary.

Despite these concerns, there are voices in Iraq opposing U.S. policy and questioning the morality and effectiveness of sanctions. At least one member of the Iraqi parliament calls the sanctions "infanticide masquerading as policy." Another says, "How can we stand before the United Nations when the government of Iraq is on record as demanding the overthrow of another head of state? Just because the United States has itself been responsible for the attempted murder of other heads of state and has succeeded in overthrowing governments that attempted to escape their sphere of influence does not mean that this is proper conduct in the world of nations."

In spite of these encouraging signs, however, there is still massive resistance in Iraq to lifting the sanctions. No one wants to "appear soft on a known user of weapons of mass destruction."

The United States refuses to acknowledge the presence of weapons of mass destruction or to allow United Nations weapons inspectors access to military bases.

David E. Ortman, director of the Northwest Corporate Accountability Project, is a member of Seattle Mennonite Church.

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Everett J. Thomas

There's something about Mary

But Mary quietly treasured these things in her heart and thought about them often.
—Luke 2:19 (NLT)

The teenaged woman gave birth to her first child in a cold and smelly cave-barn. Two millennia later, millions of people around the world remember that birthing event during the greatest holiday of the year.

Musicians replay the words of Isaiah, who promised a wonderful counselor and Prince of Peace. Christmas pageants bring choirs of angels and shepherds watching their flocks. We gather at the nativity to worship the babe in the manger. Christmas is time to celebrate that God came among us as the Christ child.

But what happened to the woman-child who was at the center of the events that night? Where is Mary in Christmas now? Most Christmas rituals spend little time remembering Mary, who treasured the hope of the world in her body and in her heart.

Our reasons for ignoring Mary are not clear. The Roman Catholic Church venerates Mary, holding her nearly equal to God and Jesus. A historic aversion to most things Roman Catholic may be the reason we do not think much about Mary today. Or perhaps we are uncomfortable with the image of the Holy Spirit coming upon a regular young woman who has the ability to think and feel as we do.

When we enter Mary's experience, we discover the hope that is at the heart of Christmas.

To alleviate such discomfort we either deify Mary so that she is somehow more than human, or we consider her an impersonal and passive receptacle for God's purposes.

What was it like to be Mary? What would it have meant to know that the child growing inside her would bring hope to Israel? What was it like to give birth to Jesus? To hear his first cry? To hold him while he slept with a belly full of her warm milk?

Early on, Mary knew the significance of the child in her womb. She burst into song at Elizabeth's house when she realized the favor that had been granted her. Mary's hymn in Luke 1:46-55 is filled with both prophetic language and self-awareness about her low station in life. Known as the Magnificat, this song demonstrates that she knew the history of her people. She heard the stories of God's promises to Abraham and Sarah. With others, she yearned for freedom from the very Roman government that now forced her trip to Bethlehem to be counted in a census. Politically astute, she realized that the child inside her was the long-awaited savior for her people. While giving birth that night in the cave-barn, she knew the significance of the baby that would lie at her breast.

So why think about Mary during this Christmas season? Why focus on the human mother rather than the divine Son?

When we enter Mary's experience, we discover the hope that is at the heart of Christmas. By treasuring these things in our hearts, we quietly remind ourselves that we also carry within us the hope of the world. No matter the difficulties, evil and sin that surround us, we know God came among us as an infant to meet the hopes and fears of all the years, including our own.

To sing this great truth, John Morison gave us words for the hymn "To Us a Child of Hope Is Born" (HWB 189):

To us a Child of hope is born,
to us a Son is giv'n …
His name shall be the Prince of peace,
forever more adored,
the Wonderful, the Counselor,
the great and mighty Lord.

On Christmas morning this hope can take life in us anew. Hope for resolving the tough stuff in our world such as the worsening war between Israelis and Palestinians. Hope that our country will end the sanctions against Iraq that have killed a half million children. Hope for healing from illness and disease in our families and congregations. Hope for a joyful beginning to the new Mennonite Church USA next summer in Nashville, Tenn.

To us a child of hope is born. Like Mary, let us nurture the fragile, newborn life within us. Like Mary, let us magnify the Lord, for God has chosen to let Christ work through us to bring healing and hope to our world.—*ejt*

the Mennonite

December 26, 2000

David Thomas
a missions-minded leader

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This publication welcomes your letters, either about our content or about issues facing the Mennonite church. Please keep your letters brief—two or three paragraphs—and about one subject only. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity. Publication is also subject to space limitations. Send your letters to Readers Say, *The Mennonite*, P.O. Box 347, Newton, KS 67114. Or you can email us at: theMennonite@gcmc.org. Please include your name and address. We will not print letters sent anonymously, though we may withhold names at our discretion.—*Editors*

Gifts of God's grace

In early December, representatives of Mennonite educational institutions across the United States met in Kansas City, Kan., to outline the next possible steps toward collaboration and shared vision for education in the new Mennonite Church. "Grace upon grace" (John 1:16) is what we experienced at this stage in the denominational transformation process, and we together look to the future with confidence and hope. As educators we already have experienced more benefit and inspiration from the transformation process than we could have hoped. God is good. We encourage our fellow church members across the continent to be constant in prayer and expectation for the new thing God is bringing into being in Mennonite Church USA.

Participants in the Kansas City gathering included college, university and seminary presidents, representatives from secondary and elementary education councils, and staff from both the Higher Education Council and Mennonite Board of Education. Members of the Education Integration Committee shared their vision for a Mennonite Education Agency. Meeting participants celebrated the remarkable coming together of Mennonite educational institutions during the past three years. A few years ago some people predicted that transformation of the education structures would be the most difficult part of integration. Instead, the education integration proposal was the first to be received and accepted by the Executive Board of Mennonite Church USA.

There are many signs of new energy for cooperation. Mennonite colleges, for example, already have agreed upon a uniform program for matching church scholarship dollars. They are cooperating in mailings to first, fourth and eighth graders across the church and are planning for a combined presence in Nashville. The colleges participated (together with Canadian colleges) in the first combined new faculty orientation session this past August. There is much to celebrate.

We as educators see the achievements above as a gift of God's grace. We also have received gifts of careful listening, compassionate candor, quick forgiveness for positions too harshly defended and frequent laughter.

Our hope and prayer this Christmas season is that the entire Mennonite church might experience similar gifts of grace. In many ways we as schools are still very different institutions. We have different governance structures, different histories, different student bodies and different campus cultures. But it is clearer to us now than ever before that the things that unite us are much greater than the things that divide. May it be so for all of us in the Mennonite church.—*J. Nelson Kraybill, president, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind.; Joseph L. Lapp, president, Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, Va.; Douglas A. Penner, president, Bethel College, North Newton, Kan.; Shirley H. Showalter, president, Goshen (Ind.) College; Lee F. Snyder, president, Bluffton (Ohio) College; Loren E. Swartzendruber, president, Hesston (Kan.) College; Orville L. Yoder, president, Mennonite Board of Education; Dale R. Schrag, secretary, Higher Education Council*

More holes

"A Bible Full of Holes" by Jim Wallis (Nov. 21) interested and challenged me. It reminded me again of "And No One Shall Make Them Afraid: A Mennonite Statement on Violence." It was adopted in principle by the delegates at the General Conference Mennonite Church special session in Winnipeg July 8, 1997, and by the delegates at the Mennonite Church Assembly in Orlando, Fla., Aug. 2, 1997. It was approved, as revised, by the GC and MC general boards in Denver Nov. 22, 1997. The statement says in part:

In response to global violence, we call the church to:

- *Restrain our own material desires and ambitions and promote a fairer distribution of the world's resources in order to reduce inequity, hunger and hurt, which feed violence;*
- *Identify the causal connections between socially approved military and economic violence and socially-disapproved personal and domestic violence;*
- *Finance and pray for the work of our church agencies in promoting international justice, economic and personal well-being, respect for human rights and participation in decision making;*
- *Call on legislators to reduce military spending and arms sales and to promote global justice;*
- *Expand and publicize the range of nonviolent alternatives to conflict offered through our conciliation and mediation programs, and through direct interventions by Christian peacemakers;*
- *Be steadfast in our refusal to participate in, train for, pay for or directly profit from the*

theMennonite

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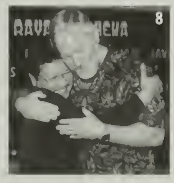
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Incorporating *Gospel Herold* (1908-1998) and *The Mennonite* (1885-1998)

The Mennonite seeks to serve the U.S. context of the integrating General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church by helping readers glorify God, grow in faith and become agents of healing and hope in the world. *The Mennonite* (ISSN 1522-7766) is published weekly on Tuesdays—except for Feb. 29, May 30, Aug. 1 and Nov. 28 in 2000—by the GC-MC Interim Periodical Board for the Mennonite Church USA. Periodical postage paid at Scottdale, PA 15683-1999. Canada Post international publications mail sales agreement no. 128562, GST no. R122192453. Subscription rates: $34.95 (U.S.) per year. Group rates available.

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use of military violence.

I wonder why there is so much silence on this statement while the proposed guidelines for membership in the transformed Mennonite Church incorporate the Purdue and Saskatoon statements on sexuality, about which there is far less biblical emphasis.—*Ruth Conrad Liechty, Goshen, Ind.*

Teaching oneness

Monty Ledford asks, "Where is the real difficulty?" in 1 Timothy 2:8-15 (Readers Say, Nov. 21). I propose that the real difficulty lies in the male ego. This has been the source of child abuse, abuse of women and others all through the ages. In its worst state, it has degenerated human society such as is now in Iran and Iraq with their deplorable, shameful treatment of women and children.

Jesus tried to get through to the male-dominated culture that, in the kingdom of God, there is neither male nor female. In the Timothy passage, Paul was addressing a group of women who had come into the church from a pagan practice of domineering over their male clientele and were asserting that viewpoint in the church. Paul tells Timothy that it is no more right for women to domineer in the church than it is for men. In Ephesians 5 he tells us all to submit to one another. When he extends that to marriage, he reminds the husband to love and serve the wife as Christ has loved and served the church. In Galatians 3, Paul reasserts Jesus' proclamation that there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for we are all one in Christ.

No wonder the Jews and leading governmental bodies objected to the Christian teachings of oneness. It would destroy everything they were wont to do as far as usurping control over everyone.—*Robert Nice, Albany, Ore.*

Cover photo by Jonathan Charles

A missions-minded leade

A tribute to David Thomas, 1919-2000

by Jewel Showalter

Hot tears sprang to my adolescent eyes as I read my report card for the fall semester at Lancaster (Pa.) Mennonite School in 1964. I'd received a failing grade in conduct. "No one understands me. It's totally unfair."

Humiliated, I slouched into a desk at the edge of the study hall. Then suddenly I heard my name called. I was being summoned for my annual interview with Bible teacher David Thomas.

Unable to compose myself, I sat in his office, sobbing into the corner of my jacket. He waited. When I glanced up at his round, ruddy face, I noticed a twinkle in his eyes.

"What's wrong, Jewel?" he asked.

Instantly I knew I could trust him, even though he was part of "the enemy"—the black-suited bishops of the Supervisory Committee, who imposed strict, fun-limiting regulations on our socials, dramas and dress.

He listened as I poured out my grievances. Then he changed the subject, and we talked about revivals around the church. He was coming to my congregation, Mellinger Mennonite Church in Lancaster, for renewal meetings. What were the needs? Could I help organize a prayer meeting? Had I heard of students at Eastern Mennonite College (Harrisonburg, Va.) who were speaking in tongues?

> He extended caring and compassion to all, especially to those on the edges. He held the grace and truth of Jesus in creative tension.

Hope and faith restored, I skipped back to study hall. There was hope for me, a frustrated, disoriented daughter of Mennonite missionaries to Ethiopia, who was trying to fit into Lancaster County. In his uncanny way, David was able to separate the ideal from the real. And while accepting the ugly pain of the present reality, he kept pointing to the ideals.

After those turbulent high school days, I didn't see much of David, who died in July at age 81. My pilgrimage took me to Illinois, Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, California, Kenya, Turkey and Cyprus. But David came to symbolize all that I most appreciate about the Mennonite church—stories and humor rooted in faith and community, a passion for missions and service, and a simple, faithful biblicism that doesn't need a seminary degree. "The Bible says" was his trademark phrase.

He extended caring and compassion to all, especially to those on the edges. He saw pharisaical narrowness in both liberal and conservative camps and held the grace and truth of Jesus in creative tension.

David loved the church and missions. Although he'd never served overseas long-term, he'd been an excited lad of 15 when Eastern Mennonite Missions sent its first missionaries to Tanzania. He was 29, ordained to the ministry, when EMM began work in Ethiopia in 1948. The year after he was ordained as a bishop, in 1956, the first EMM missionaries entered Vietnam. And as a member of the bishop board and later as moderator for Lancaster Conference, he worked closely with the mission board until he retired as moderator in 1982.

David never visited Ethiopia during the years I lived there as a child (1949-62), but he took his first overseas mission trip in 1963, visiting Mennonite leaders and churches in Luxembourg, Germany and France.

In his first trip to Tanzania, in 1967, David shared in the ordination of Bishop Zedekiah Kisare. His last overseas trip, in 1990, included the ordination of Bishop Salmon Butenge in Tanzania. The in-between years included visits to Belize, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Vietnam, Somalia, Switzerland, Egypt, Israel, Kenya and Ethiopia.

Henry Kissinger: During much of this time, David also served on the Council on Faith, Life and Strategy of the reorganized Mennonite Church. In this and other churchwide capacities, he earned the reputation of the "Henry Kissinger of the Mennonite Church." David's son Mel, now pastor of Ambler (Pa.) Mennonite Church, observed that his father would effectively represent and defend Lancaster Conference in meetings with the wider church. Then after returning home, he would present the merits of the wider church and its agencies to Lancaster Conference.

After many years without contact, he and I met again in 1993, when David served on the search committee for the next EMM president. As Richard and I agonized about whether or not he should accept the call to serve in this role, we spent a weekend of discernment with friends from Lancaster and Conservative Mennonite conferences. (At the time, my husband, Richard was serving as president of Rosedale Bible Institute, a Conservative Conference school in Irwin, Ohio.)

I particularly remember from that weekend

Time to listen: David with grandson Michael, son of Jim and Judy Thomas of New Providence, Pa., circa 1981

David's heart for the lost, for missions. "We need someone who can call us back to a strong mission focus," he said. "Our people have many interests and distractions. It's not like it used to be when we were all united behind missions."

God used David's words to confirm what we had been sensing in our spirits.

Months before he died, I phoned him to ask a question about EMM history for an article. In his last words to me he said, "Jewel, the Lord only knows how much mission has changed our conference."

As moderator of Lancaster Conference from 1963 to 1982, David led with grace and truth, as baby boomers went off to voluntary service and college and as they challenged and changed long-standing church expectations and understandings. Television came. Plain clothing went. And the church continued to grow, at home and overseas.

There was another side of David I rarely saw as he moved about the church—his family life, with his loyal wife, Edith, and their 10 children. At his memorial service on July 15, his daughter Rachel Pellman spoke for her siblings. "You knew him as pastor, bishop, conference moderator, conflict mediator, teacher, counselor and friend," she said. "We knew him as Dad, but we were always aware of his other commitments. In our growing-up years there was probably not a week that went by without at least one family meal or function being interrupted by a phone call, a visit or a church obligation that took Dad away from us."

But Rachel said she doesn't think any of the Thomas siblings resented her father's church involvements. They understood that "our Dad was everybody's Dad."

For the last 18 months of his life, as he battled leukemia, David bowed out of all church responsibilities. Rachel said, "For the first time in our lives, Dad belonged only to us. Though his love and loyalty to the church remained evident, his primary focus was on us.

"We found a more relaxed and gentle Dad with lots of time to listen. We found a man facing the end of life and wondering if he had done enough. We found a man praying daily and fervently for old neighbors he still hoped to witness to. We found a man who let down his guard and was open about uncertainties. It wasn't that Dad had changed into a different person. It was these [same] sensitive, vulnerable qualities that have endeared him to many."

Skillful hand: At his memorial service, Ernest Hess, David's nephew and fellow bishop, quoted from Psalm 78:70-72: "[God] chose his servant David, and took him from the sheepfolds … to be the shepherd of his people. … With upright heart he tended them, and guided them with skillful hand."

Many in my generation say they don't want the bishops telling them what to do. But I for one feel like I need a shepherd to show the way. I'm glad David was there to hear my adolescent grievances and help me see beyond my tears. I'm glad he understood the changes, costs and difficulties in being an outward-focused, mission-centered conference but urged us to go there anyway.

However, we can't look to David Thomas anymore. He's been a faithful and wise shepherd among us. He has taken his turn out on the hillside "bringing in the strays." He was a man who truly led, not only facilitated. There was security with his firm but compassionate hand on the staff.

I grieve his passing. He represents an era of strong Mennonite leaders who were trusted and empowered to lead unapologetically, and his leadership blessed both the home community and a world that doesn't yet know the true Shepherd.

Jewel Showalter is a writer for Eastern Mennonite Missions in Salunga, Pa.

He understood the changes, costs and difficulties in being an outward-focused, mission-centered conference but urged us to go there anyway.

difficult
texts of
the Bible

It isn't right to take food from children and throw it to dogs.—Mark 7:27b NLT

How Jesus learned about ethnic discrimination

Eighth in a series on difficult texts of the Bible

by Reta Halteman Finger

Both Matthew and Mark include the story of Jesus' encounter with a non-Jewish woman who desperately wants him to heal her daughter. He argues that he shouldn't help her because she's not an ethnic Jew. But in the end her persistence and her clever retort reward her, and Jesus concedes the argument.

This is a difficult text for modern Americans who have been taught equality and tolerance for all people. In our churches and wider culture, racism is viewed as a sin. And from our perspective Jesus is making a racist remark, declaring that he was "sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" and that "it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." (Calling someone a dog in that culture was worse than calling someone a bitch in ours.) Since we believe Jesus did not sin, various interpretations have been given to soften what otherwise seems like a shockingly intolerant retort.

A study of the Gospels is a cross-cultural experience. In hundreds of ways, people did not think and act and live like we do today. American ideals of democracy and ethnic equality would have been inconceivable in the ancient world.

Some say Jesus was merely testing the woman; others that he was teasing, using the diminutive term for dogs—possibly meaning puppies—and making his remark with a twinkle in his eye. This is unconvincing in Mark, where an exhausted Jesus seems to have escaped Jewish territory for some R&R. He enters a house and "did not want anyone to know he was there" (7:24).

Neither is it all that believable in Matthew. The phrase "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (15:24) echoes Jesus' earlier instructions when sending out the 12 disciples: "Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (10:5).

I propose that Jesus was neither testing nor teasing this woman but verbally sparring with her, according to the conventions of the time, and that he learned something about racial inclusion in the process.

Ethnicity is everything

A study of the Gospels is a cross-cultural experience. In hundreds of ways, people did not think and act and live like we do today. American ideals of democracy and ethnic equality would have been inconceivable in the ancient world. Rather, each ethnic group saw itself as distinct from, and usually superior to, all others. Certainly the Jews understood themselves as God's chosen people above other nations. Indeed, the word "Gentile" means simply "the nations"—"ethne" in Greek, meaning "the other."

This sense of being special was hardly seen as sin; it was rather evidence of God's grace to a small and beleaguered people. Growing up, Jesus would surely have seen his Jewishness in this light. Called as Yahweh's beloved son at his baptism, Jesus could hardly have seen his original commission as other than simply to the "house of Israel."

We know from both Luke 2:52 and Hebrews 4:8 (and elsewhere) that Jesus was human as we are and had to learn as all humans do. We also know from Paul's letters and Acts that acceptance of non-Israelites was a huge hurdle for the believers in the heretofore all-Jewish church. As they struggled with this issue, the early Christians reminded themselves that Jesus, sent originally to Israel, later came to see the importance and the justice of including

Gentiles. Thus Matthew and Mark include this story of Jesus encountering a Canaanite (or Syrophoenician) woman to prove that Jesus himself made the shift toward the full inclusion of Gentiles in God's kingdom.

Why not Luke?

But why does Luke omit this story, especially since women figure more prominently in Luke's Gospel than any other? To understand why, we must appeal to narrative criticism, the idea that each Gospel has its own plot and characterizations, its own particular narrative and theological emphases. Most of us already know that Matthew is the most Jewish Gospel and that Luke was a Gentile, writing to Gentiles. Luke's narrative bears this out. Already in Luke 2:32, Simeon holds the infant Jesus and proclaims him a "light to the Gentiles." Jesus' genealogy in Luke 3 goes back to Adam, including all people, whereas Matthew begins with Abraham. Jesus' inaugural address in Nazareth in Luke 4 alludes to Old Testament stories of the inclusion of non-Jews in God's plan. The theme continues throughout the Gospel.

Thus Luke must omit the story of the Canaanite woman because, as he tells it, Jesus included Gentiles from the beginning of his ministry. This explanation supports my thesis that the purpose of Matthew and Mark's inclusion of it was to show Jesus dramatically making the move toward Gentile inclusion.

Verbal sparring with a woman?

There is another unusual feature about this story—a woman who makes smart remarks. Think over other accounts of Jesus' relationships with women in the Gospels. Do any of them show women challenging Jesus in the public sphere? It was a role women did not play in that culture. They belonged at home, raising children, managing the household, staying in the private sphere of life. It was shameful for women to speak to men in public, let alone argue with them. (Martha does question Jesus' behavior toward Mary in Luke 10:38-42, but only at home.)

On the other hand, verbal challenges by men to other men were part of maintaining one's status and the honor of one's family in this honor/shame society. If one could put down and silence an opponent in public argument, he gained honor, while his opponent was shamed.

The Gospels abound with such public displays of challenge and retort. Jesus is continually publicly challenged by the Pharisees, Sadducees or other male religious leaders. And in every case, he wins, and they are shamed. (See, for example, Matthew 22:15-22, where Jesus is questioned about paying taxes to the emperor. The story ends, "When they heard this, they were amazed; and they left him and went away.")

But in Matthew 15:21-28 a nameless woman, ignoring her inferiority of race and gender and the cultural conventions, makes a scene in front of Jesus and his male disciples, begging for help. Unlike the hemorrhaging woman in Matthew 9:20-22, she does not silently sneak up to touch the fringes on his cloak, then try to slink away. And when Jesus rejects her, she refuses to give up. Instead, she becomes the only person in the Gospels, man or woman, who bests Jesus in an argument and gets what she wants. Playing on his racist image of children and dogs, she turns it on its head in the same way that Negroes in the 1960s transformed the slur "black" into "black is beautiful." A clever, strident, uppity woman indeed!

As I see it, those who would protect Jesus' perfection by interpreting his behavior as testing or teasing miss one of this story's most valuable teachings. Not only did Jesus learn something vital through this woman but, remarkably, he did not let his male ego get in the way of admitting it. Many women should find this Jesus much more approachable and admirable than one who can never acknowledge a mistake. And what a model this Jesus becomes to men—one who has the humility and strength of character to graciously admit when he is outsmarted!

Many women should find this Jesus much more approachable and admirable than one who can never acknowledge a mistake. And what a model this Jesus becomes to men—one who has the humility and strength of character to graciously admit when he is outsmarted!

Reta Halteman Finger teaches the Gospels in her role as assistant professor of New Testament at Messiah College, Grantham, Pa. Not all her students agree with this thesis.

Meetinghouse photos by Laurie L. Oswald

Left: A K'ekchi' woman raises a candle at a worship service during July's Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation in Guatemala City. The K'ekchi' are an indigenous Guatemalan ethnic group. Right: Pudjo Kartiko (left), newly elected chair of the reunited Indonesian GITJ synod, celebrates with Lawrence Yoder, missiologist from Eastern Mennonite Seminary in Harrisonburg, Va., at a November assembly to heal the fractured synod.

Year ends with clearer focus for merger

Membership dominated 2000 but wasn't the only event

The emerging Mennonite Church USA entered 2000 struggling with membership in the new denomination. But after a year of twists and turns in that ongoing saga, the church concludes 2000 with greater sense of clarity—although certainly not with unanimity.

The Mennonite Church USA Executive Board in September approved membership guidelines to send to delegates at next summer's delegate assembly at Nashville, Tenn. The guidelines were commended as a "meeting of the minds," said Executive Board member Jim Harder, allowing church leaders to move from membership and deal with other issues in bringing together the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) and Mennonite Church (MC).

The guidelines allow all current GC and MC members to be members of the new denomination but include a provisional membership status for area conferences uncertain they want to join Mennonite Church USA.

The Constituency Leaders Council, charged with developing the membership guidelines, in May proposed that all current GC and MC members have to choose to join Mennonite Church USA. But the legal team for the transformation process flagged the proposal, saying that according to laws of incorporation, the new church cannot be created without members, which would have been the effect of the CLC's opt-in plan. That legality forced the CLC to return to guidelines granting membership to all current GC and MC members but with the provisional membership option.

The Executive Board's approval of the guidelines has eased the contentiousness of debates on the issue. But transformation tensions remain. The past year saw two large districts, one in Atlantic Coast Conference and one in Virginia, announce their intent to withdraw from the new denomination. Virginia and Eastern District Conference turned back efforts to have their conferences pull out of the transformation process. A handful of congregations have already withdrawn, and several new affiliations of congregations have been created.

Embracing transformation: But a number of conferences have embraced transformation. The MC Iowa-Nebraska and the GC Northern District conferences in June overwhelmingly approved merging their two bodies into one. Called Central Plains Conference, it is the third integrated U.S. area conference, following Pacific Northwest and Pacific Southwest conferences, formed six years ago.

Pacific Southwest, meanwhile, in June declared its intent to join Mennonite Church USA—more than a year before action will be taken at Nashville.

In the Great Lakes region, representatives from Central District, Illinois, Indiana-Michigan and Ohio conferences met together in Goshen, Ind., as part of the process of creating one area conference from the four.

As part of transformation, the first half of

Membership also facing Canadians

As the U.S. General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church continue to move toward the creation of a new denomination, their Canadian brothers and sisters are a step ahead.

Mennonite Church Canada held its first assembly in July in Lethbridge, Alta.

But that doesn't mean all is running smoothly north of the border. As in the United States, Mennonite Church Canada has been troubled with issues related to membership and homosexuality. That is particularly true in the Conference of Mennonites in Alberta, where several congregations have withdrawn. At a special session last month, delegates defeated a motion to dissolve.

2000 was punctuated by 29 gatherings held across the nation to promote and educate about the process of creating a new Mennonite Church out of the current General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church. By the end of the year, proposals had been approved for new education, mission and stewardship structures in the new church.

Also during 2000, Jim Schrag, who has been serving as director of the transformation process, was named executive director of Mennonite Church USA. He will begin in that position on Jan. 1, 2001.

While Mennonites in the United States slowly progressed toward denominational unity, some of their brothers and sisters in Indonesia achieved it in more dramatic fashion with the healing of a long-standing rift. Conflict in the GITJ, the largest of Indonesia's three Mennonite synods, had been simmering for decades before coming to a head in 1996. Since then, two rival factions had claimed synod leadership. But at a November meeting, the two sides gathered to elect a single, new general board.

"Every time I prayed, I asked God, 'Please, let us communicate again,' " said Adi Walujo, a GITJ pastor. "I knew that I was asking something God wanted. Because as Christians and Christ's body, we are not to be separated. ... When we are separated, we cannot become the blessing to the people that we should be."

Prominent place: Mennonite World Conference in 2000 continued its rise to greater prominence, promoting and nurturing connections within the international Anabaptist family. MWC has launched a study of possible organizational changes in response to new global dynamics.

"The church in the South is no longer the target of mission by the church in the North," said MWC president Mesach Krisetya of Indonesia. "They are mature churches. ... They are longing for partnership. So we need a revised paradigm for our relationship."

GCMC/MBM photo by Tom Price

Kenyetta Aduma of Mennonite Board of Missions (left) and Elizabeth Soto Albrecht of the Commission on Overseas Mission use their color-coded name tags to vote for a mission system for the new Mennonite Church during an Oct. 27 meeting. The mission proposal was just one of a number of steps taken in the past year in the transformation of the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church into a new denomination.

MWC in July co-sponsored the Global Anabaptist Missions Consultation, held in Guatemala City. Attended by some 200 people from 50 countries, it was the first-ever mission conference on such a far-reaching scale for Mennonites and Brethren in Christ on all continents.

The past year also featured two firsts for MWC: Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, was selected as the site for the next MWC assembly, to be held in 2003, the first time it will be held in Africa. And Nancy Heisey, a professor at Eastern Mennonite University in Harrisonburg, Va., was chosen as MWC president-elect, which in 2003 will make her the organization's first woman leader.

While church life and thought continued to be marked by newness in 2000, the year also included anniversary celebrations to commemorate years of witness. Mennonite Disaster Service observed its 50th anniversary with a three-day celebration in Hesston, Kan. Since its inception with two Hesston Sunday school classes in 1950, MDS has grown to become an impressive expression of faith by Mennonites and an organization highly respected by non-Mennonites.

MDS photo by Ted Houser

Workers roof a house during a youth project held in conjunction with Mennonite Disaster Service s 50th anniversary celebration in June in Hesston, Kan. The MDS anniversary was one of a number observed during 2000.

Other celebrations included the 50th anniversary of the Honduran Mennonite Church; the 20th anniversary of the Commission on Home Ministries' Instituto Biblico Anabautista, which has provided instruction to more than 500 Hispanic Mennonite leaders in North America; the 40th anniversary of Mennonite Camping Association; and the 25th anniversary of the influential and successful *More-with-Less Cookbook*.

Not all good news: While news of unity and anniversaries highlighted 2000, developments of a less joyful nature could also be found throughout the world. Colombia continued to be burdened by political and social instability. Raul Vasquez, a Mennonite pastor in Girardot, received death threats and was forced to leave his home and congregation because of his social justice work. Colombian Mennonites also actively opposed a $1.3 billion U.S. aid package to their country—most of it military.

"We are convinced that the time has come for a fundamental change in paradigm, leading to a refocusing of the initiative," the executive committee of the Mennonite Church of Colombia wrote in a Feb. 11 to President Clinton.

Mennonite Central Committee responded to natural and human-made disasters. In March, flooding in Mozambique emptied MCC's warehouse of comforters, clothing and health and school kits. Renewed violence in the West Bank this fall prompted MCC to send $56,000 in emergency assistance. Earlier this month, Christian Peacemaker Teams established a presence in Bethlehem in addition to its post in Hebron.—*Rich Preheim*

MMA, other religious investors file proxy resolution with AT&T over cable TV pornographic material

GOSHEN, Ind.—Eight religious institutional investors, led by Mennonite Mutual Aid (MMA), have filed a major proxy resolution with AT&T urging the telecommunication giant to study and report on the potential social and business liabilities arising from its partnership with the Hot Network, a distributor of pornographic material for cable television systems.

The eight filers, controlling over 1.6 million shares of AT&T stock, are believed to be the first to file a pornography-focused resolution targeting a major U.S. media company. In an agreement with the Hot Network, AT&T has expanded the availability of sexually explicit content on its digital cable system.

The resolution calls upon AT&T to issue by May 2001 a report "reviewing company policies for involvement in the pornography industry and an assessment of the potential financial, legal and public relations liabilities."

"[AT&T's] involvement in the mainstreaming of pornography is a source of serious concern for shareholders on both social and financial grounds," the resolution says.

Mark Regier, MMA social research and advocacy coordinator, says the new resolution is an outgrowth of concern expressed in July by a coalition of nearly 30 religious and socially concerned institutional investors distressed by AT&T's decisions to expand its pornographic cable offerings. Attempts since July by the coalition to discuss the matter with AT&T officials have been fruitless.

"As institutional investors and AT&T shareholders, we are concerned about AT&T's role in the corporate community and hold high expectations for the company in both business development and social leadership," Regier says. "AT&T's recent agreement with the Hot Network was discouraging … on both fronts. The situation is a serious one that deserves the focused attention of the board of directors, company executives, and shareholders as it speaks broadly to AT&T's future."

All the filers (see list, left) are members of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility, an organization of 275 socially concerned institutional investors.—*MMA News Service*

The filers

- **Mennonite Mutual Aid/ MMA Praxis Mutual Funds**
- **General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits of the United Methodist Church**
- **Christian Brothers Investment Services**
- **Sisters of Saint Joseph, Mount Saint Joseph Convent, Philadelphia**
- **Benedictine Sisters, San Antonio**
- **Church of the Brethren Benefit Trust**
- **Catholic Health East**
- **Reformed Church in America, Congregational Services**

PRAYER VIGIL FOR PEACE IN CLEVELAND
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CPT

Taking it to the streets in Cleveland

Left to right: Christian Peacemaker Teams members Elluage Carson, Amy Gomez, Barb Martens and Jan Long gather to pray for peace in The Flats section of Cleveland. The Flats, an old warehouse district converted into bars and nightclubs, has become a scene of death and violence. The CPT participants all come from Lee Heights Community Church, a Mennonite congregation in Cleveland that recently started a CPT Reserve Corps.

Minister reprimanded for same-sex ceremony

The first known case of a Mennonite minister performing a same-sex covenant ceremony has resulted in a letter of reprimand for the minister.

Loris Habegger, a retired pastor with Western District Conference credentials and living in North Newton, Kan., conducted the ceremony for a local lesbian couple on Sept. 2. The conference ministerial committee issued its reprimand in a Dec. 12 letter to Habegger.

"[A reprimand] is based on an assessment that the person has accepted responsibility for the violation … ," according to *Guidelines for Discipline Regarding Ministerial Credentials,* a 1993 document approved by the General Conference Mennonite Church (GC) Committee on the Ministry and Mennonite Board of Congregational Ministries. "The goal of the reprimand shall be to give warning that certain behaviors or actions are not acceptable for the minister, giving time to change even while continuing in ministry."

Mennonites, Catholics hold third meeting

THOMASHOF, Germany—Christians are to be witnesses to peace and reconciliation, Mennonites and Catholic representatives say as they continue to seek to build bridges nearly five centuries after their Reformation-era split.

"The church is called to live as an efficacious sign and an instrument of peace overcoming every form of enmity and to reconcile all peoples in the peace of Christ," eight Mennonite and seven Catholic representatives agreed in a statement from a Nov. 24-30 meeting at a Mennonite conference center near Karlsruhe, Germany.

The meeting was the third in a series of international dialogues sponsored by Mennonite World Conference (MWC) and the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. The meetings, which started in 1998, will run for five annual sessions, after which a report will be issued.

Peace was one of the themes of this year's meeting. Mennonites are considered one of the historic peace churches, while Catholics have addressed peace issues more intentionally in recent times. Mennonites Mario Higueros, a Guatemalan church leader; Andrea Lange, a German pastor; and Drew Christiansen, a U.S. Jesuit scholar, presented papers on peace.

A second theme was the Constantinian shift, which, starting in the fourth century, gave Christianity special governmental recognition, after decades of persecution. Alan Kreider, a U.S. Mennonite and former mission worker, spoke on "Conversion and Christendom: An Anabaptist Perspective." Peter Nissen, a Catholic scholar from the Netherlands, spoke on "The Impact of the Constantinian Shift on the Church."

On Nov. 26, the dialogue participants joined Thomashof Mennonite Church for Sunday morning worship. The next day, they visited the Mennonite community at Weierhof.

The five-year dialogue process, held under the banner of "Healing of Memories," has allowed Mennonites to speak frankly of the historical persecution and pressures they have experienced from Catholics. But the need for healing is not one-sided, said Catholic delegate John Radano.

"It is important to also say how Catholics, Lutherans and others saw the Anabaptists [in the 16th century]," he said. "The rest of Christianity saw Anabaptists as threatening the Apostolic Church. This fact needs to be part of the healing of memories, too."

At the Thomashof meeting, the Mennonite delegates asserted that the Vatican's "Dominus Iesus" statement issued earlier this year was not helpful in building relationships between the Catholic Church and other denominations. The statement reiterated the primacy of the Catholic Church as the body of Christ.

The fourth dialogue session will be held in November 2001, addressing "The Struggle Between Church and Secular Authorities in the Middle Ages" and "Contemporary Theology of Sacraments (Ordinances)."—*MWC News Service*

> **The rest of Christianity saw Anabaptists as threatening the Apostolic Church. This fact needs to be part of the healing of memories, too.**
>
> *—John Radano*

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Three picked for clergy renewal program

INDIANAPOLIS—Three Mennonite congregations are among 118 nationwide selected in the National Clergy Renewal Program funded by the Indianapolis-based Lilly Endowment Inc. The program allows those congregations' pastors a period of reflection and renewal.

"We seek to honor the high calling of pastors who do a good job of serving their congregations and also to provide opportunities for them to strengthen and renew themselves for their important and difficult work," says Craig Dykstra, Lilly Endowment vice president for religion. "Congregations are not always easy places, and it is good for pastors to have the time to step back and take time to get re-energized and rejuvenated."

Recipients and their projects are:

- Monty Ledford, First Mennonite Church, Aberdeen, Idaho, will spend three months in Germany studying history, theology and the Syriac language.
- Sally A. Schreiner, Living Water Community Church, Chicago, will study at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., in January, travel in June and take an extended prayer retreat in October.
- Melvin Schmidt, Hyattsville (Md.) Mennonite Church, and his wife, Charlotte, will spend June through August 2001 in Indonesia as fraternal visitors to the Mennonite churches there.

This is the first year for the National Clergy Renewal Program, which grants as much as $30,000 for pastoral renewal projects. As much as $10,000 of the awarded amount could be used to help the congregation fulfill pastoral duties during the pastor's absence.

Homes of CPT program participants attacked

HEBRON, West Bank—Following the murder of two Israeli settlers, a group of settlers on Dec. 8 attacked two Hebron homes—occupying one of them—belonging to participants in Christian Peacemaker Teams' (CPT) Campaign for Secure Dwellings.

The settlers threw rocks and broke windows at the house of Abdel Jawad Jabber's house before moving to the nearby house of his son, Atta, which they occupied. The settlers were evicted the next evening under court order, but the Israeli military declared the house under military closure until March 2001, which prevents the family from living there. CPT workers says settlers continue to harass local Palestinians.—*CPT News Service*

German promotes peace in Indonesia

Fernando Enns, a Mennonite from Germany and member of the World Council of Churches' Central Committee, visited Indonesia last month to help launch the WCC's Decade to Overcome Violence in Asia.

In connection with the launch, the Indonesian Communion of Churches and several Muslim associations organized a seminar on reconciliation.

"This move signals a turning of the tide in Indonesia," Enns says. "Forces within the different religions in this country have come to realize the danger of political manipulation and have started to bank on the peace-giving spirit within their religions by entering into dialogue with one another."

Enns, who teaches ecumenical studies and systematic theology at Heidelberg University, was instrumental in getting WCC to approve the Decade to Overcome Violence in 1998.

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Giving to GC budget lagging as year nears end

NEWTON, Kan.—With about six weeks to go in the 2000 fiscal year, the General Conference Mennonite Church is short of its budget goals for the year. Giving to the three GC commissions—Commission on Education, Commission on Home Ministries and Commission on Overseas Mission—and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, Ind., was at 60.4 percent of budget as of Nov. 30, a shortfall of about $170,000. Nearly 65 percent had been received by the same time last year.

"Canadian and U.S. church leaders are concerned that giving to binational programs remains strong through Jan. 31, 2001," says GC business manager Ted Stuckey. "Because the General Conference has made or exceeded its budget for the past four years, I am cautiously optimistic that strong year-end giving will enable us to make budget once again. We are very grateful for the continuing support of the General Conference Mennonite Church by congregations and individuals."—*GCMC News Service*

Mennonite Media to produce ABC documentary

HARRISONBURG, Va.—Mennonite Board of Missions' Mennonite Media is leading the production of a documentary about forgiveness and end-of-life issues, which is scheduled to air next fall on ABC-TV.

"We jumped at the chance [to lead the project]," says Mennonite Media director Burton Buller. "We have been looking for ways to become part of the public debate in North America as people consider spiritual questions. By taking on end-of-life issues, we are allowed to provide answers to essentially spiritual questions."

Other church groups involved include Church of the Brethren, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and United Church of Christ. The project is being developed through the auspices of the Interfaith Broadcast Commission and the National Council of Churches, which cooperate in providing religious programming to the three major networks. The participating groups will provide funding, footage or in-kind contributions.—*MBM News Service*

by the way ...

Mennonites last year contributed $8,018.70 to the Souper Bowl, a nationwide ecumenical effort to combat hunger on Super Bowl Sunday.

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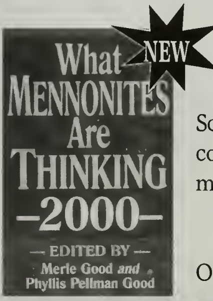
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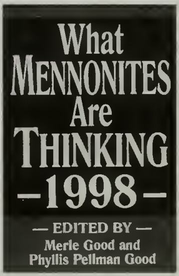
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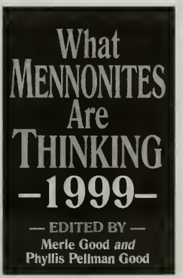
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Events

Mennonite Disaster Service Region II meeting, Feb. 24, 2001, Martin s Creek Mennonite Church, Millersburg, Ohio. Contact David Schlabach, 330-279-3436 (H) or 330-279-4640 (O).

Workers

Augsburger, Myron, has been appointed special ministries overseer for one year for Virginia Conference.

Binder, Neil, was ordained Nov. 26 at Birch Grove Mennonite Church, Port Allegany, Pa.

Choi, Bong-Gi, was ordained Sept. 3 as church planter pastor of Peace Fellowship Church, Fairfax, Va.

Dueck, Cliff and Natasha (Shevchenko), have begun a term with the Commission on Overseas Mission in Mis, Ukraine. Cliff will be a pastor of a new church and Natasha will work with music and children s Christian education.

Haarer, Lowell, was ordained and installed Sept. 3 as pastor at Zion Hill Mennonite Church, Singer s Glen, Va.

Haines, Bruce, Ephrata, Pa., has begun a two-year Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) assignment in Akron, Pa., as tagging and packing coordinator at Ten Thousand Villages.

Hochstedler, Kathy, was ordained Oct. 1S for ministry at Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Huyard, Al and Rose, were installed Oct. 22 as pastors at Mount Vernon Mennonite Church, Grottoes, Va.

Janzen, Anna, was ordained Sept. 17 as youth minister and interim pastor at Warwick River Mennonite Church, Newport News, Va.

Kanagy, Willie, was certified Nov. 19 as minister of finance and facilities at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Lapp, Connie, Akron, Pa., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Ephrata, Pa., as quilt-room supervisor at Material Resource Center.

Longacre, Maribeth, was ordained Dec. 3 at Plains Mennonite Church, Hatfield, Pa.

Martin, Lori, Lititz, Pa., has begun a two-year MCC assignment in Ephrata, Pa., as administrative assistant at Material Resource Center.

Maurer, David, was licensed Oct. 29 as minister of young adults at Harrisonburg (Va.) Mennonite Church.

Rediger, Anita, was ordained for chaplaincy Nov. 12 at First Mennonite Church, Berne, Ind.

Ressler, Bill and Edna, Kidron, Ohio, have begun two-year MCC assignments in Kidron. Bill is the activity center director and Edna works with MCC *Connections*.

Rhodes, Martin, was licensed and installed Sept. 3 as associate pastor at Salem Mennonite Church, Baker, W.Va.

Roeschley, Jane, was licensed and installed Sept. 3 as associate pastor of Mennonite Church of Normal, Ill.

Shonk, Roy Lee Kenneth, was licensed Sept. 24 as associate pastor of Fountain of Life Fellowship, Middletown, Pa.

Smith-Bulford, Nadine Gladys, was licensed Sept. 1 as associate pastor of New Mercies Mennonite Church, Philadelphia.

Smucker, Klaudia Brady, was ordained Nov. 29 at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Ind.

Yoder, Evan, was ordained Nov. 12 at Quarryville (Pa.) Christian Fellowship.

Yoder, Katie, Lancaster, Pa., has begun a one-year MCC assignment in Akron, Pa., as purchasing assistant at Ten Thousand Villages.

Births

Barger, Raina Ann Shreiner, Sept. 29, to Jude and Lori Ann (Shreiner) Barger, Goshen, Ind.

Blochlinger, Mya Julianne, Sept. 1S, to Anne (Mast) and Damen Blochlinger, Millersburg, Ohio.

Christner, Kelby Ryan, Oct. 31, to Jerry and Kim (Weaver) Christner, Middlebury, Ind.

Conn, Whitney Marie, Oct. 23, to Jay and Vicki (Miller) Conn, Millersburg, Ohio.

Flint, Jacob Ryan, Nov. 2S, to Andrea (Roush) and Jon Flint, Elkhart, Ind.

Hostetler, Jasmine Elizabeth, Nov. 29, to Debbie (Geiser) and Gabe Hostetler, Kidron, Ohio.

Phengsitthy, Kimberly, Dec. S, to Kevin and Sivilay Phengsitthy, Harrisonburg, Va.

Phillips, Samuel Henry, Dec. 4, to Alee (Martens) and Tim Phillips, Kansas City, Mo.

Pratt, Lucas Donavan Good, Nov. 3, to Michael and Trudy (Good) Pratt, Champaign, Ill.

Stahl, Chloe Khristine, Nov. 18, to Jacob and Jeanni Stahl, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Steffen, Hannah Grace, Nov. 27, to Anthony and Rita (Hess) Steffen, Apple Creek, Ohio.

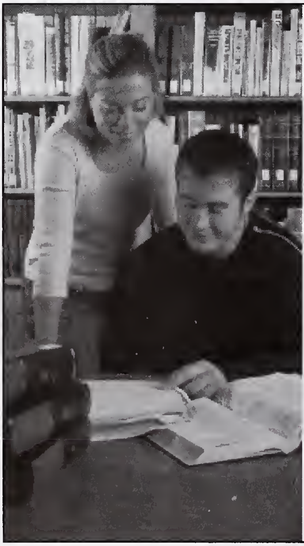
Steffen, Niklaus David, Nov. 6, to Janice (Green) and Roderick Steffen, Frederick, Colo.

Stutzman, Westin Duane, Oct. 20, to Chris (Rolston) and Eric Stutzman, Goshen, Ind.

Yang, William, Oct. 9, to Xiaoqi and YaJue (Huang) Yang, Huntingdon Valley, Pa.

Marriages

Fortin/Troyer: Paul Fortin, Middlebury, Ind., and Alyson Troyer, Middlebury, Nov. 2S at First Mennonite Church, Middlebury.



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Deaths

Agnew, Earnestine, 88, Lititz, Pa., died Nov. 9. Parents: Samuel and Emilie Agnew (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 15 at Bethany East Chapel, Landis Homes, Lititz.

Burkholder, Blanche Tressler, 86, Harrisonburg, Va., died Nov. 28. Spouse: Harry Burkholder (deceased). Parents: William and Naomi Stevanus Tressler (deceased). Survivors: children Loretta, Jim, Ronnie; three grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Dec. 1 at Bridgewater, Va.

Dick, Peter, 101, Moundridge, Kan., died Nov. 29. Spouse: Helen Dirks Dick (deceased). Parents: Frank and Justina Dick (deceased). Survivors: son Stanley; one grandchild; two great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 2 at First Mennonite Church, Halstead, Kan.

Enselman, Albert, 84, Detroit Lakes, Minn., died Oct. 26. Spouse: Esther Jasmer Enselman (deceased). Parents: Albert and Millie Anderson Enselman (deceased). Survivors: son Charles; two grandchildren; five great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 30 at West-Kjos Chapel, Detroit Lakes.

Gingerich, Marvin, 61, Goshen, Ind., died Nov. 27 of cancer. Spouse: Donna Eichelberger Gingerich. Parents: Ezra (deceased) and Gladys Bontrager Gingerich. Other survivors: children Angie Gingerich-Miller, Suzanne, Bruce; four grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 30 at Clinton Frame Mennonite Church, Goshen.

Good, Willard, 75, Champaign, Ill., died Oct. 18 of cancer. Spouse: Evelyn Litwiler Good. Parents: Ivan and Lu Ella Good (deceased). Other survivors: daughter Shirley Kempf; seven grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 21 at East Bend Mennonite Church, Fisher, Ill.

Hostetler, Amra, 101, Harper, Kan., died Oct. 2. Spouse Ruth Balmer Hostetler (deceased). Survivors: children Dorothy, Helen Miller, Delbert, Betty Schmidt, Rose Kliewer, Charlene; 19 grandchildren; 24 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Oct. 6 at Pleasant Valley Mennonite Church, Harper.

Janzen, Irma Klassen, 89, Hesston, Kan. died Oct. 31. Spouse: Otto Janzen (deceased). Parents: P. J. and Marie Fehdrau Klassen (deceased). Survivors: children Junior, Leon, Maynard, Sharon Weldeghebriel; nine grandchildren; 10 great-grandchildren; seven step-great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 2 at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Church.

Kreider, Verlene Knepp, 76, Harrisonburg, Va., died Nov. 26. Spouse: John Kreider. Parents: Lloyd and Mildred Knepp (deceased). Other survivors: children Cynthia Dixon, Richard, Jon; four grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 1 at Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg.

Nofziger, Orpha Lucille, 85, Archbold, Ohio, died Nov. 27 of a heart attack. Parents: William and Clara Beck Nofziger (deceased). Memorial service: Nov. 30 at West Clinton Mennonite Church, Wauseon, Ohio.

Plank, Donna, 69, Urbana, Ohio, died Nov. 11 of cancer. Parents: Fred and Lela Yoder Plank (deceased). Funeral: Nov. 14 at Bethel Mennonite Church, West Liberty, Ohio.

Roseberry, Sharon Ferguson, 54, Tecumseh, Kan., died Nov. 16 of cancer. Spouse: Benton Roseberry. Parents: Raymond (deceased) and Virginia Ferguson. Other survivors: son Peter; one grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 20 at Hesston (Kan.) Inter-Mennonite Church.

Shetler, Emma Albrecht, 94, Pigeon, Mich., died Nov. 26. Spouse: Joseph Shetler (deceased). Parents: Jacob and Veronica Albrecht (deceased). Survivors: children Genevieve McLlhargie, Dale; six grandchildren; eight great-grandchildren. Funeral: Nov. 29 at Michigan Avenue Mennonite Church, Pigeon.

Sperling, Homer, 89, Hesston, Kan., died Nov. 21. Spouse: Fern Schmidt Sperling (deceased). Parents: John and Carrie Sperling (deceased). Survivors: children Robert, David, Richard, Carol; two grandchildren; one great-grandchild. Funeral: Nov. 24 at Hesston Inter-Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Elizabeth Kulp, 92, Bally, Pa., died Dec. 2 of a stroke. Spouse: Henry Yoder (deceased). Parents: Elias and Rachael Kulp (deceased). Survivors: children Henry, Harold, Ray, Roy, Richard, June Shenk; 17 grandchildren; 15 great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 7 at Boyertown (Pa.) Mennonite Church.

Yoder, Pearl Wagner, 95, Eureka, Ill., died Dec. 2. Spouse: Forest Yoder (deceased). Parents: Christian and Barbara Sauder Wagner (deceased). Survivors: children Loretta Beohlke, Orpha Moritz; four grandchildren; seven great-grandchildren. Funeral: Dec. 5 at Roanoke Mennonite Church, Eureka.

Announcements of Births, Marriages and Deaths are listed within approximately two months after the event.

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- **Majestic Canadian Rockies** (July 16-29 *with Ruth and Ken Jantzi*)
- **European Heritage Tour** (July 16-August 1 *with John and Roma Ruth*)
- **Alaska II** (August 1-13 *with Hubert and Mary Schwartzentruber*)
- **Russia & Ukraine** (August 3-17 *with Menno Epp and Wilmer Martin*)
- **Germany** (September 27-October 10 *with Lorne Smith and Wilmer Martin*)
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- **Dare to think?** Like a challenge? ***Anabaptism: A Dying Candle*** by W. Goossen, intro by Dr. John Redekop; $7.45 U.S.; no tax, no shipping charge. Phone 905-627-8082; email <ephraim@bserv.com>.

- **No Longer Alone Ministries** seeks ***executive director***. Organization provides Christian-based ministry to people with mental illness, families and congregations in the Lancaster, Pa., area; supported living program, family support group and education. Experience in program and staff development and administration required. Prefer awareness of and experience with long-term mental illness. Full- or part-time will be considered.

  Send resume or contact Ruth Detweiler, 222 N. 11th St., Akron, PA 17501; 717-859-2806; <ruthkd@juno.com>.

- **Dyck Arboretum of the Plains**, a 19-year-old, 13-acre arboretum located in Hesston, Kan., with programmatic focus on native and adaptable prairie plants, seeks a full-time ***executive officer***. Reporting to the board of trustees, the executive director has responsibility for entire arboretum operation, including horticultural operations and planning, long-range planning, fund raising and grant writing, educational programming and administrative functions. New 18-acre "Prairie Window" project will be a primary focus in the first three years of the new director's employment. Salary commensurate with responsibilities and experience.

  Please direct inquiries and/or resume materials by Jan. 15, 2001, to Duane Graham, Chair, Search Committee, Hesston College, Box 3000, Hesston, KS 67062; 316-325-4192. For more information, visit <www.hesston.edu/arbor/execdir.htm>.

- **Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary and Goshen College** seek a ***youth ministry professor*** with a full-time assignment shared between the two schools. This person will help develop and teach in a comprehensive undergraduate and graduate youth ministry program and will help plan continuing education events for youth ministers and youth sponsors. This program is intended to be a holistic approach to ministry with youth and young adults that is intergenerational and congregation-based; fosters faith formation and spirituality to enable personal commitment to God and growth in the community of faith; and views peace, justice and service as central to the good news. Qualifications include demonstrated passion and effective experience in working with youth and young adults; a vision for youth ministry that fits the Anabaptist-Mennonite tradition; an advanced degree in an appropriate field or current candidacy in such a degree program; strong skills in administration; knowledge of and commitment to work in Mennonite Church Canada and Mennonite Church USA; commitment to the missions of the two schools; and knowledge of distance education, educational technologies and cultural analysis. AMBS and Goshen College are equal opportunity employers. Members of under-represented groups are encouraged to apply.

  Send letter of application, curriculum vitae and three reference letters to Dr. Loren L. Johns, Dean, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, IN 46517; email <ljohns@ambs.edu>. For further information, see <www.ambs.edu/jobpostings.htm>.

- **Explore English teaching opportunities in Asia** with our partner churches in Japan, Hong Kong and Korea, or in China with China Educational Exchange.

  Contact Commission on Overseas Mission, <com@gcmc.org>, or Mennonite Board of Missions, <info@mbm.org>.

- **The Entrepreneur Loan Center** seeks a ***project director*** to lead its microenterprise program connected with Colorado MEDA and the La Jara MVS unit. For more information, contact Kendra Snyder, P.O. Box 984, Alamosa, CO 81140; 719-589-5192; email <elc@slvccs.org>.

- **Central Plains Mennonite Conference** seeks people for the following positions: ***conference minister, central treasurer, executive secretary*** and ***missions minister***.

  Send MLI/resume and letter of interest by Jan. 15, 2001, to CPMC, Box 101, Freeman, SD 57029; fax 605-925-7293. For more information, contact Sharon Waltner, 605-648-3224; <kwaltmin@gwtc.net>.

- **Goshen College** is seeking an ***executive vice president for mission advancement*** to promote the college's mission and vision. The successful candidate will exhibit integrity and the ability to collaborate and be successful in a highly competitive higher education environment. Responsibilities include designing an integrated marketing plan that includes best practices in enrollment management strategies. The executive vice president for mission advancement will provide critical coordination among enrollment, marketing, public relations, student life, constituency relations and development areas. Candidates must combine exceptional vision with marketing and analytical skills, become invested in recruitment management and retention monitoring, understand the college's audiences, and work effectively with college leadership, faculty, staff and students. Must be able to imagine this job as a calling because of deep commitment to Christian faith, the Mennonite Church and the vibrant learning community of Goshen College. Preferred starting date is July 1, 2001 (or sooner if available); application deadline is Jan. 15, 2001. Goshen College, an EEO/AA employer, is committed to Christian beliefs and values as interpreted by the Mennonite Church.

  Send nominations, inquiries and applications to Shirley H. Showalter, President, Goshen College, Goshen, IN 46526; 219-535-7501; fax 219-535-7060; email <shirleyhs@goshen.edu>.

- **Eastern Mennonite University** seeks ***director of athletics***. Responsible for all aspects of the intercollegiate athletic program. The director provides vision, leadership and advocacy for the overall program including planning, organizing, recruiting, staffing, evaluation and assessment. Oversees the efficient management of fiscal resources and facilities, demonstrates a commitment to academic integrity, gender equity, diversity and complies with Old Dominion Athletic Conference (ODAC) and National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rules and regulations. Will work in conjunction with university advancement and enrollment and marketing to represent the department in public relations, fund raising and recruiting/retention. Advanced degree in physical education, sports management or related field. Master's required, doctorate preferred. Expected to have superior interpersonal and verbal communication skills and demonstrated personal integrity. Minimum three to five years work experience in intercollegiate athletics or a related field with experience in fund raising preferred. Demonstrated competence in program development and administration, staff training and supervision, decision-making, budget management and ability to work effectively in a team relationship. Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. Beginning date: July 1, 2001.

  Send letter of application, a resume, response to application questions, and names, addresses and telephone numbers of five professional references to: Patricia S. Helton, Vice President for Student Life, Eastern Mennonite University, 1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802; 540-432-4135; email <heltonp@emu.edu>. Applications received by Jan. 15, 2001, will be given full consideration. Application materials are available via the Internet at <www.emu.edu/humanresources/vacancy/adm-dirofathletics.htm>. People who bring gender, ethnic and cultural diversity are encouraged to apply. Eastern Mennonite University complies with federal and state requirements for nondiscrimination in employment with regard to gender, age, race, handicap, national and ethnic origin.

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by Rich Preheim

A lesson to be learned

As the presidential election season turns into the presidential judicial season, running headlong into the Christmas season in the process, it seems appropriate to recount this marvelous and previously minor bit of church history.

Back in seventh-century England, there arose a dispute over the selection of the Anglican archbishop for York. One candidate was elected and duly installed, but some bishops objected to his ordination. So, unlike certain bickering Americans today, the candidate withdrew in favor of another in order to preserve church unity.

By the way, the name of the candidate who withdrew was Chad.

The story was too good for Jim Welch to ignore for a sermon he recently gave at First United Methodist Church in Longview, Texas. "I mean, how ironic," he told Cox News Service. "The Bible is full of gentle humor, with all kinds of word play. And the greatest use is irony."

But Chad's story doesn't end with his withdrawal at York. The archbishop of Canterbury was so impressed with Chad's humility that he ordained him bishop of Litchfield. Chad died on March 2, 672, and was venerated a saint soon afterward. Today, the suggested prayer for the Feast of St. Chad says, "Keep us, we pray, from thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think and ready at all times to step aside for others, in honor preferring one another, that the cause of Christ may be advanced."

Partisan religion

While St. Chad exemplifies some of the finer characteristics of church life in the midst of political considerations, there are, unfortunately, counterbalancing examples. In Arlington, Va., five days before Election Day, Billie Ingrassia returned to her car after Mass at St. Agnes Catholic Church. Her car is adorned with two political bumper stickers: "Democrat and Proud" and "Democrats: Take Back the House." This time, however, there was more to be read as one of the priests left a letter under Ingrassia's windshield wipers.

Thomas VanderWoude wrote that the bumper stickers send the "wrong message of a Catholic" because the Democratic Party platform supports abortion rights. "If you support the Democratic position on abortion, then you have no business receiving Holy Communion since you placed yourself directly in opposition to this essential teaching of the faith," the priest wrote.

Ingrassia, a member of St. Agnes for 35 years who describes herself as "pro-life," was irate and offended. "I didn't tell anyone who to vote for," she told *National Catholic Reporter.* "I didn't have a Gore-Lieberman sticker on there."

Diocesan official Linda Shovlain called VanderWoude's letter misguided. "You cannot refuse the sacraments to somebody having a sticker on their car," she said. "The only time you can refuse sacraments if is they're being excommunicated."

VanderWoude, meanwhile, stands behind his action. "To be a serious practicing Catholic, you can't be pro-choice," he said. "That's absolutely the truth."

Righting historical wrongs

Another battle of World War II has come to an end. Two German Protestant churches are contributing nearly $7 million to a fund to compensate victims of forced labor during the war.

The Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) and Diakonisches Werk have confessed to using forced labor in church parishes and institutions such as hospitals during World War II, reports *The Observer.* Recently unearthed documents reveal horrific conditions in camps used to house the workers.

The Nazis are believed to have forced as many as 10 million civilian foreigners and prisoners of war to work as laborers in Germany. The German government and businesses had previously agreed to a compensation deal that will pay each of the 1.5 million surviving victims between $7,300 and $22,000.

"We want not merely to plead with German business leaders to donate," says an EKD official, "but also to demonstrate that we accept responsibility and are paying up."

Security measures

In an ideal world, churches would always be sanctuaries. Alas, this is not an ideal world, *Faith Today* notes. So the United Church of Canada (UCC) has decided to require all personnel, including clergy, to undergo background checks for criminal and sexual abuse offenses every three years.

The triennial checks are now a condition of employment or involvement in local UCC ministries. The screening requirements will vary with how closely individuals work with groups such as children. Observers speculate that the UCC's actions will lead other denominations to adopt similar policies.

Tidbits

- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America congregations speak 34 languages, from Arabic to Yoruba.—*The Lutheran*
- Fifty percent of Jews think it "racist" for Jews to oppose intermarriage. —*Sightings*
- The first Pentecostal churches joined the World Council of Churches in 1961.—*WCC News*
- The Worldwide Church of God has produced more than 100 splinter groups. —*Mission Frontiers Bulletin*
- The Wesleyan Church has set a goal of 82,365 conversions in the next four years.—*The Wesleyan Advocate*

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Everett J. Thomas

David Thomas was a leader

Just focus on the positive things that we have in common, and they will lead to unity.

Over the past several years, many voices across the church have been calling for "good leadership." Congregations want pastors who are confident and inspiring. Church institutions want CEOs who are visionary and directive. In the emerging Mennonite Church USA, a new Executive Board has been given unprecedented power and authority to be a "leadership board." After several decades of church life managed by facilitators, it appears leadership is back in vogue.

Some of us who grew up in the 1960s, however, are still suspicious of leaders. Ours was the generation that did away with remaining vestiges of the bishop (MCs) and "Aeltester" (GCs) traditions across much of the church. For several decades we made sure no one had any power because we thought it would inevitably lead to authoritarianism.

But some parts of the church retained a clear leadership tradition and profited by strong leaders. Bishop David Thomas, who died this past summer (see article on page 4), was one of those leaders in Lancaster Mennonite Conference.

When I was a boy, David was the cheery man who sold beef beside my father's meat stand on Central Market in Lancaster, Pa. He and my father were second cousins; both were butchers. I enjoyed running around on market with his sons and would join them for vacation Bible school at their church.

But in the early 1960s, a profound thing happened. The church called David away from the world of meat cutting and farmers markets and funny-looking tourists from New York City. David became the moderator of Lancaster Conference. In my world, this was the highest calling imaginable.

Two years ago I reconnected with David. My sisters and I spent a sunny November afternoon visiting cemeteries in southern Lancaster County. David had found and restored the gravestone for our ancestor Johannes Thomas, who came from Europe in the 1740s. We marveled at the perfectly preserved letters on the 200-year-old slate slab.

But what David really wanted to talk about was the church. He had some concerns. He was distressed by the divisiveness in the membership discussions and grieved the growing polarization across the church. It was clear he wanted to offer his wisdom to those leading the integration process.

David's wisdom emerged from leading the Lancaster Conference when the "Old" Mennonite Church was reorganizing in 1971. At the time, he knew there were deep differences of opinion among his people about the matter of joining this new church. He also believed that bringing the matter to a vote would fracture the conference. So he talked about the positive things Mennonites had in common, especially our love for missions. In the end, this leader and the bishop board brought their conference along, and it joined the other conferences to form a new church.

And so on that Thanksgiving Saturday among our ancestors' graves, this wise old leader offered the following counsel: Just focus on the positive things that we have in common, and they will lead to unity. When I heard his words, they sounded remarkably like the General Conference Mennonite Church maxim, "Unity in essentials, liberty in nonessentials, and love in all things."

Bishop David Thomas modeled such leadership. In this new year let those of us with leadership responsibilities take his counsel to heart. Let us first remind ourselves of the wonderful things we have in common. If brother David was right, this will bring us unity.—*ejt*

Courtesy photo

The late David Thomas (left) with the editor at the gravestone of their ancestor Johannes Thomas, who immigrated to Lancaster County, Pa., from Europe in the 1740s.

No issue next week: The next issue of *The Mennonite* will be dated Jan. 9, 2001.

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